STAN LEE WITH BOB HARRAS & MICHAEL HIGGINS
ALEX SAVIUK • FRED FREDERICKS

# DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH™

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MAD CAVE 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

FROM THE WORLD OF FLASH GORDON™

# LISTEN! THE SOUND OF SINGING

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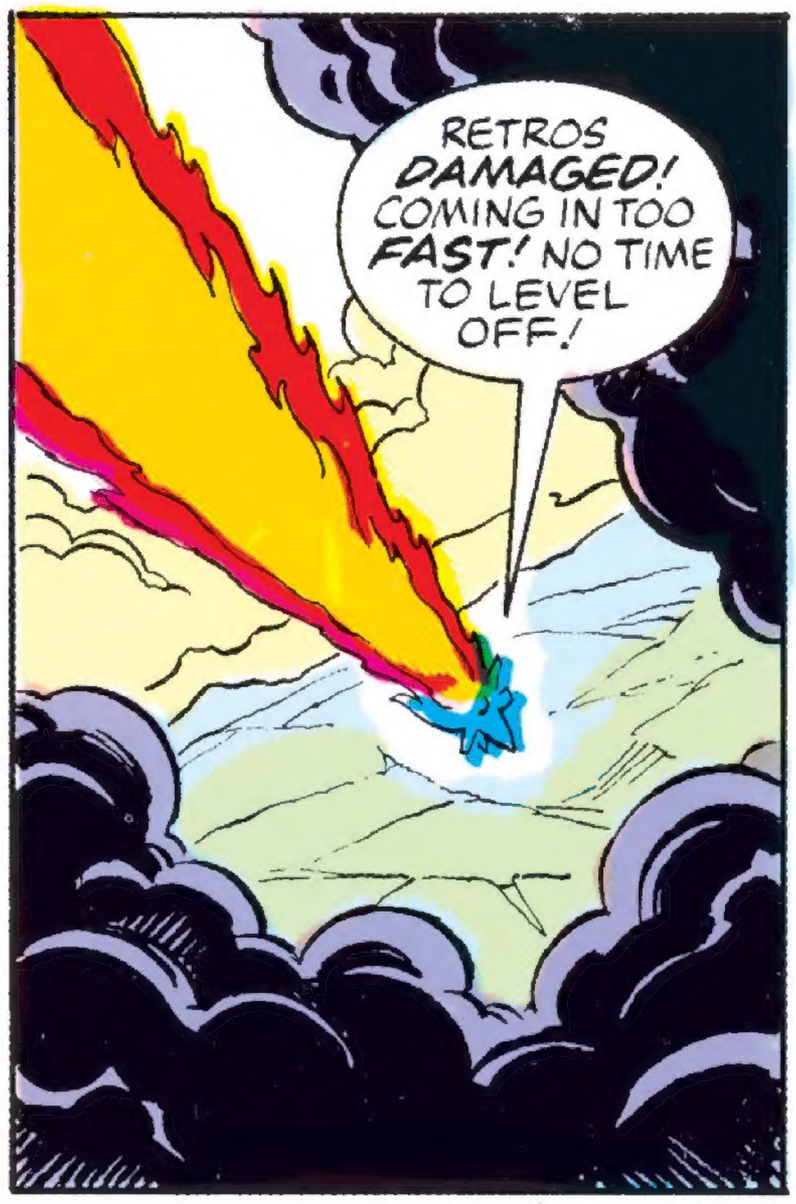


CAN'T FAIL NOW! TOO MUCH AT STAKE! HAVE TO-- ARHHHHH

FOUR DARING MEN AND A HANDFUL OF YOUNGSTERS-- AGAINST THE OVERWHELMING POWER OF THE GALAXY'S DEADLIEST TYRANT, WITH THE FATE OF MANKIND HANGING IN THE BALANCE! BUT THESE ARE NO ORDINARY MEN--AS YOU SHALL SEE!

# DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH

WRITTEN BY STAN LEE
WITH AN ASSIST BY BOB HARRAS
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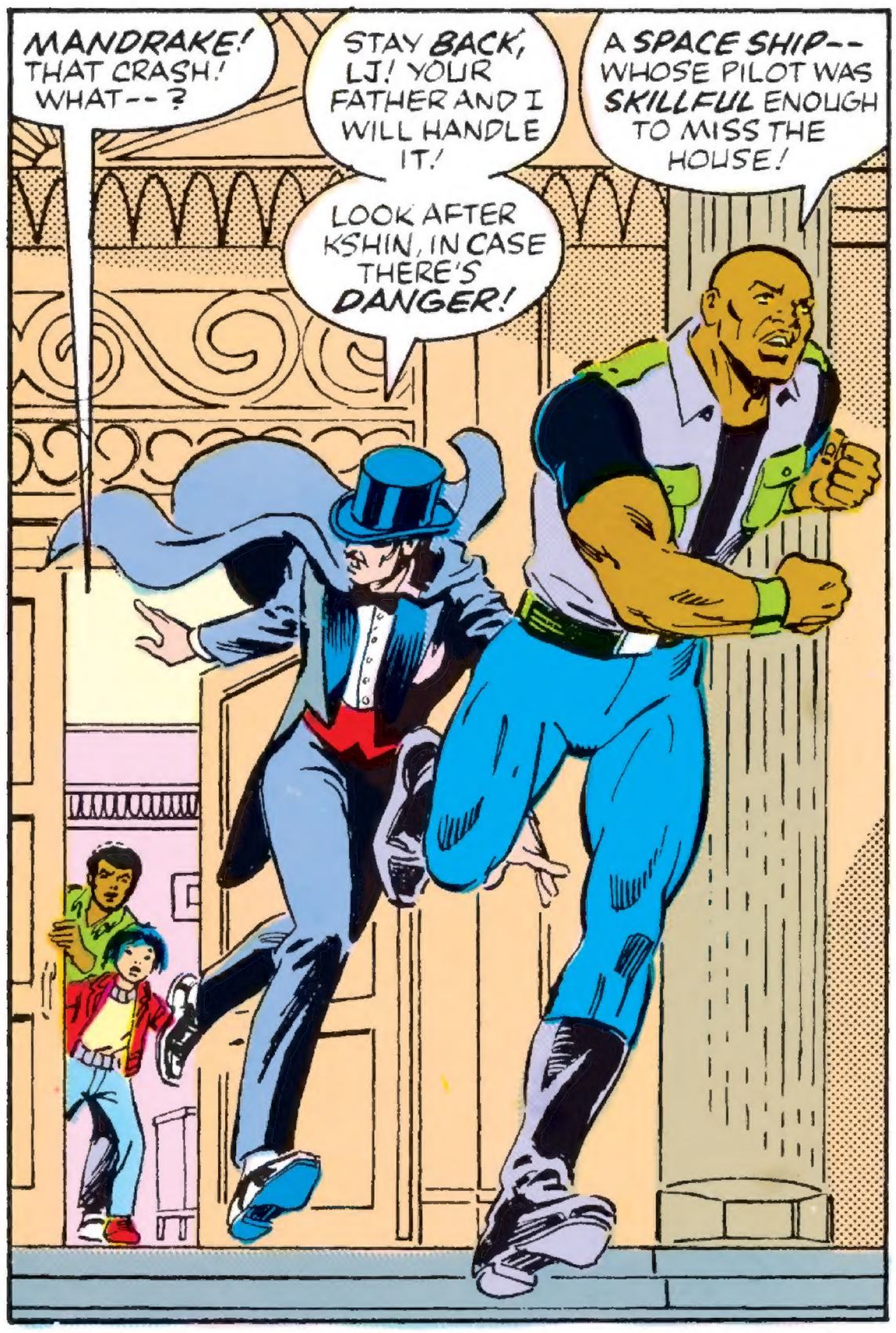
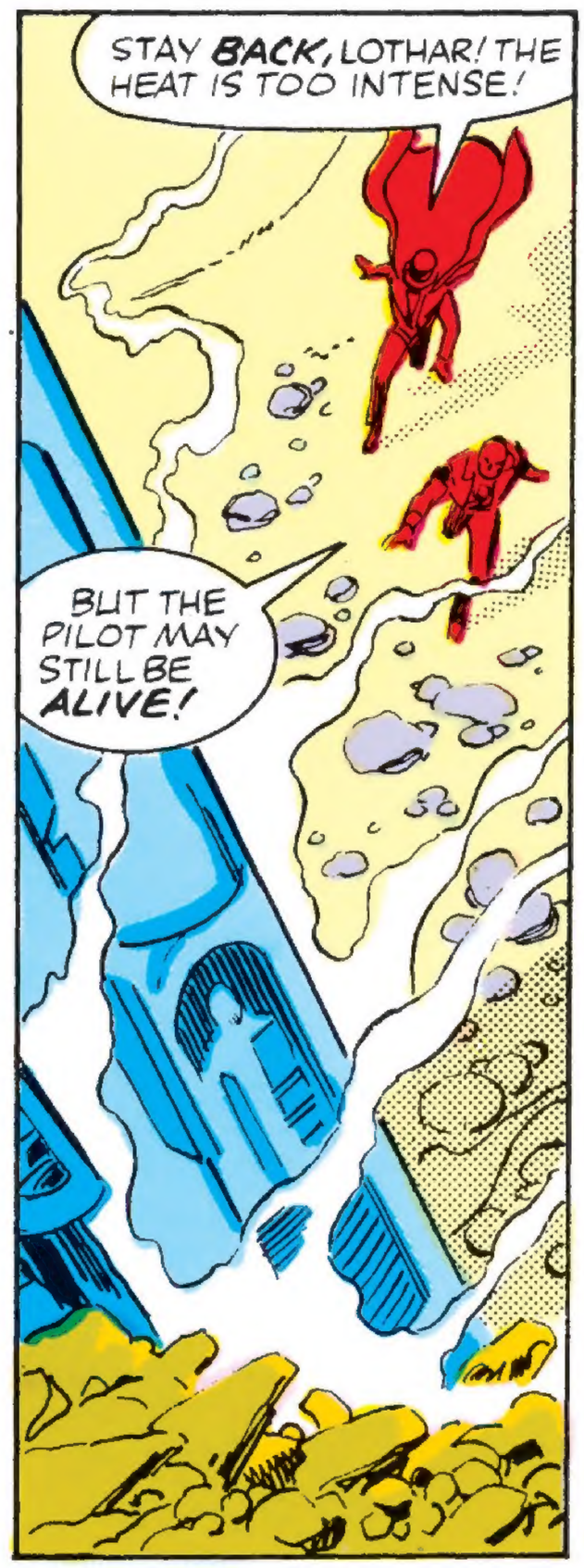
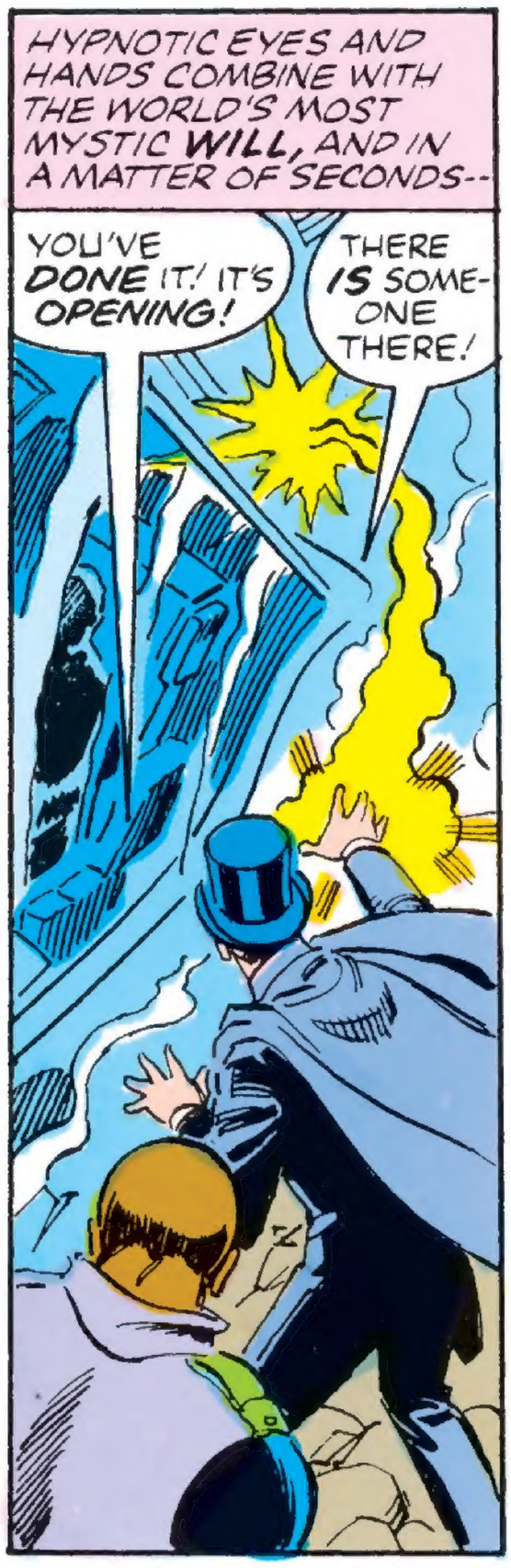

MANDRAKE! THAT CRASH! WHAT--?
STAY BACK, LJ! YOUR FATHER AND I WILL HANDLE IT!
A SPACE SHIP-- WHOSE PILOT WAS SKILLFUL ENOUGH TO MISS THE HOUSE!
LOOK AFTER KSHIN, IN CASE THERE'S DANGER!


STAY BACK, LOTHAR! THE HEAT IS TOO INTENSE!
BUT THE PILOT MAY STILL BE ALIVE!

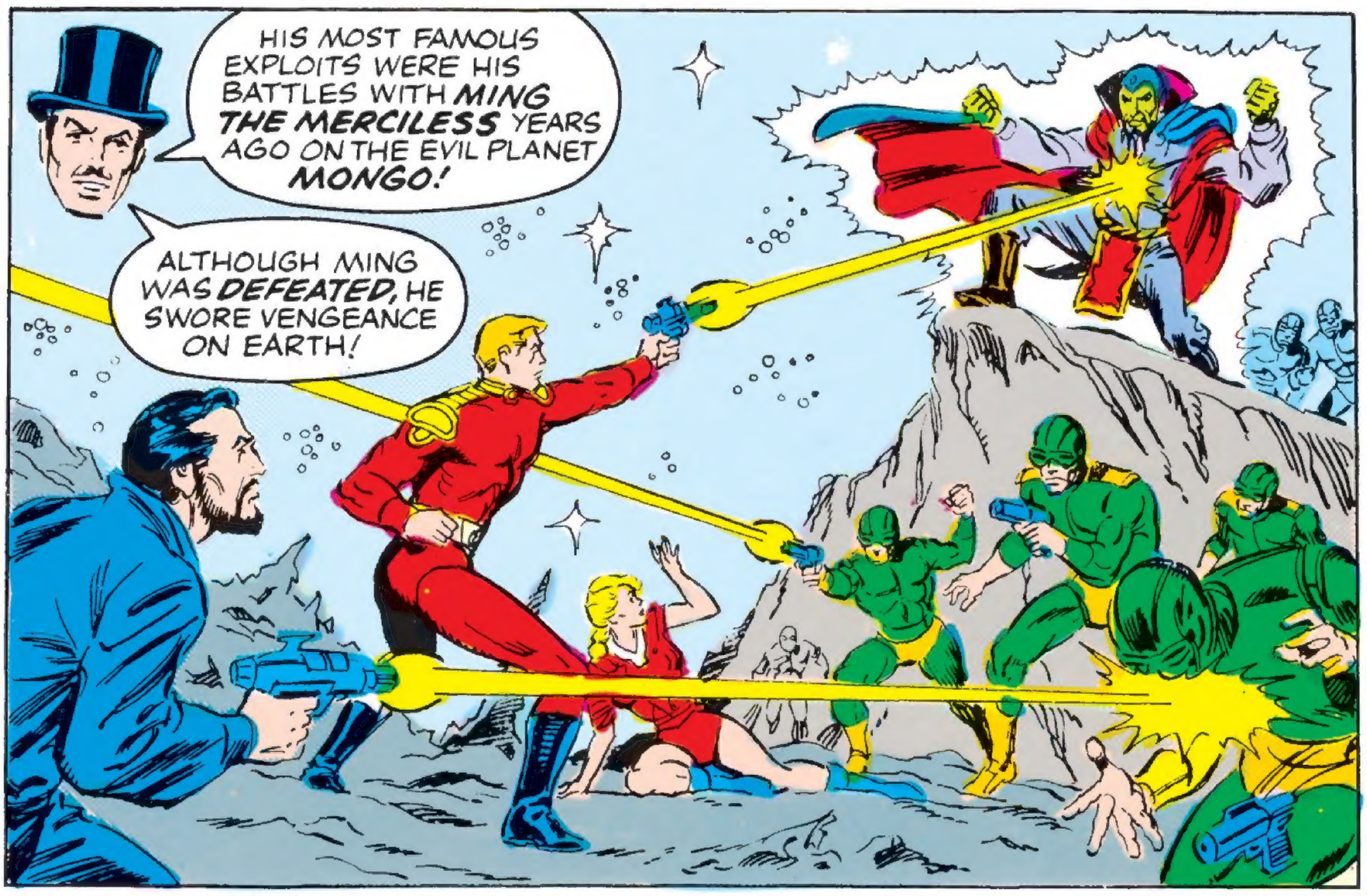
TRUE, OLD FRIEND! BUT I'LL OPEN THE HATCH MY WAY!


HYPNOTIC EYES AND HANDS COMBINE WITH THE WORLD'S MOST MYSTIC WILL, AND IN A MATTER OF SECONDS--
YOU'VE DONE IT! IT'S OPENING!
THERE IS SOMEONE THERE!

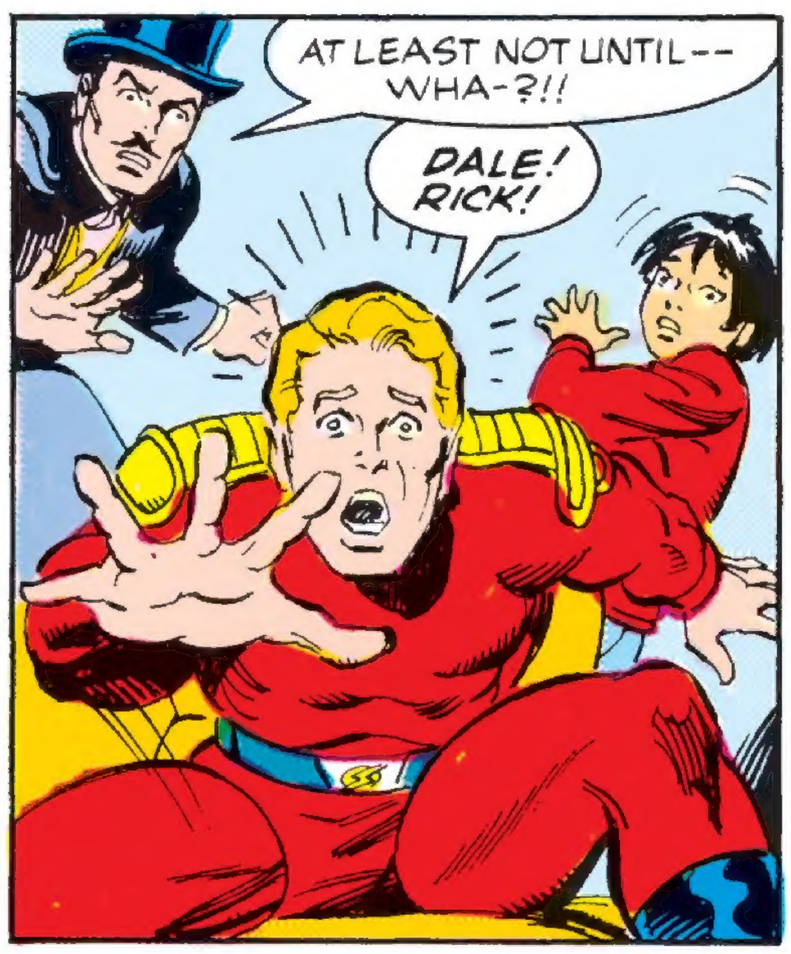
IT'S FLASH GORDON! WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!
HE'S ALIVE! QUICK, BRING HIM INSIDE!
WHAT IS HE SAYING?
MUST... SAVE THEM... FROM... MING--

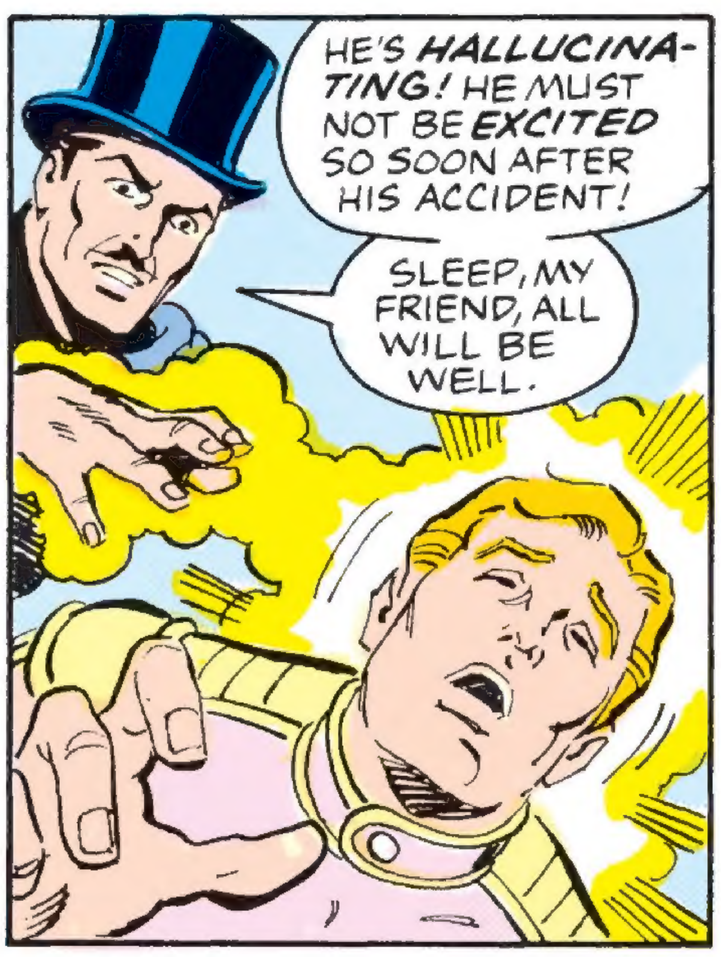
SECONDS LATER...
WHAT HAPPENED, DAD? FLASH GORDON IS THE GREATEST SPACE PILOT OF ALL! HOW DID HE CRASH? AND WHY HERE?
PATIENCE, LJ! WE'LL LEARN THE ANSWER WHEN HE RECOVERS!
HE'S COMING TO! THE AUTOMATIC IMPACT CUSHION SAVED HIM!
WHO IS FLASH GORDON, MR. LOTHAR?

WHO'S FLASH GORDON? HEY, KSHIN, THAT'S LIKE NOT KNOWING SPIDER-MAN! FLASH IS THE MOST FAMOUS SPACE EXPLORER IN THE GALAXY!
OH, I SEE! BUT-- WHO IS SPIDER-MAN?
BE PATIENT WITH KSHIN, LJ! REMEMBER HE IS FROM A DIFFERENT LAND, WITH A DIFFERENT CULTURE.
FLASH GORDON HAS BEEN OUR FRIEND FOR YEARS, KSHIN! THERE IS NO SPACEMAN MORE SKILLFUL, OR MORE FEARLESS IN BATTLE!

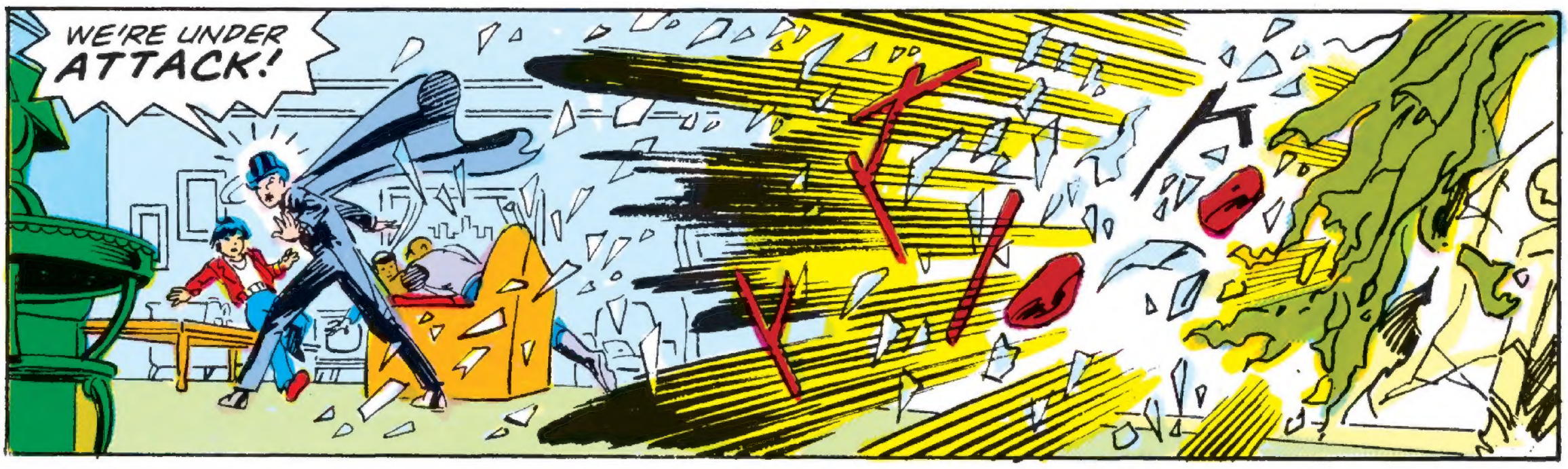

HIS MOST FAMOUS EXPLOITS WERE HIS BATTLES WITH MING THE MERCILESS YEARS AGO ON THE EVIL PLANET MONGO!
ALTHOUGH MING WAS DEFEATED, HE SWORE VENGEANCE ON EARTH!

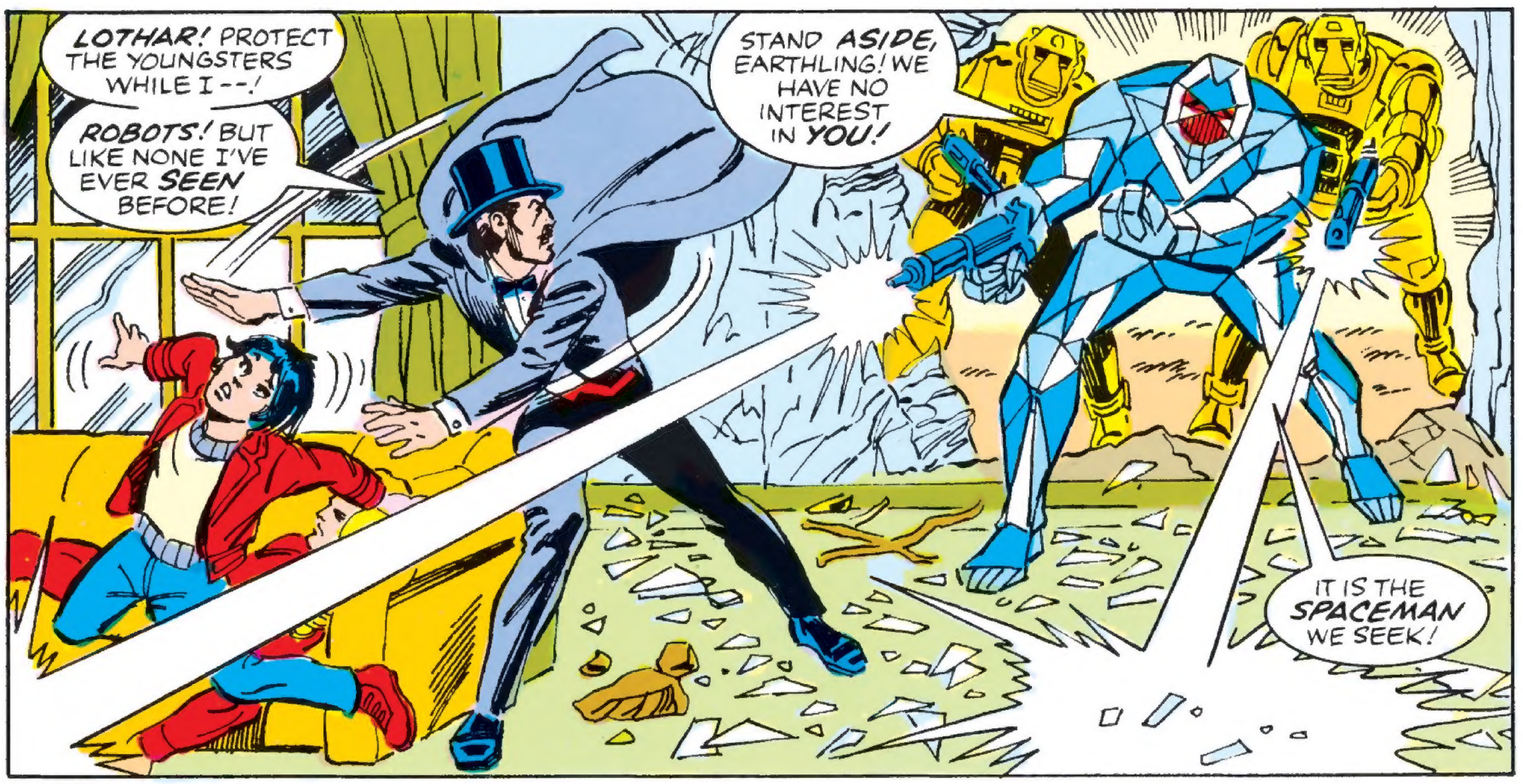
BUT WITH FLASH PATROLLING THE SPACEWAYS, WE'VE NEVER BEEN THREATENENED BY MING AGAIN!


AT LEAST NOT UNTIL-- WHA-?!!
DALE! RICK!

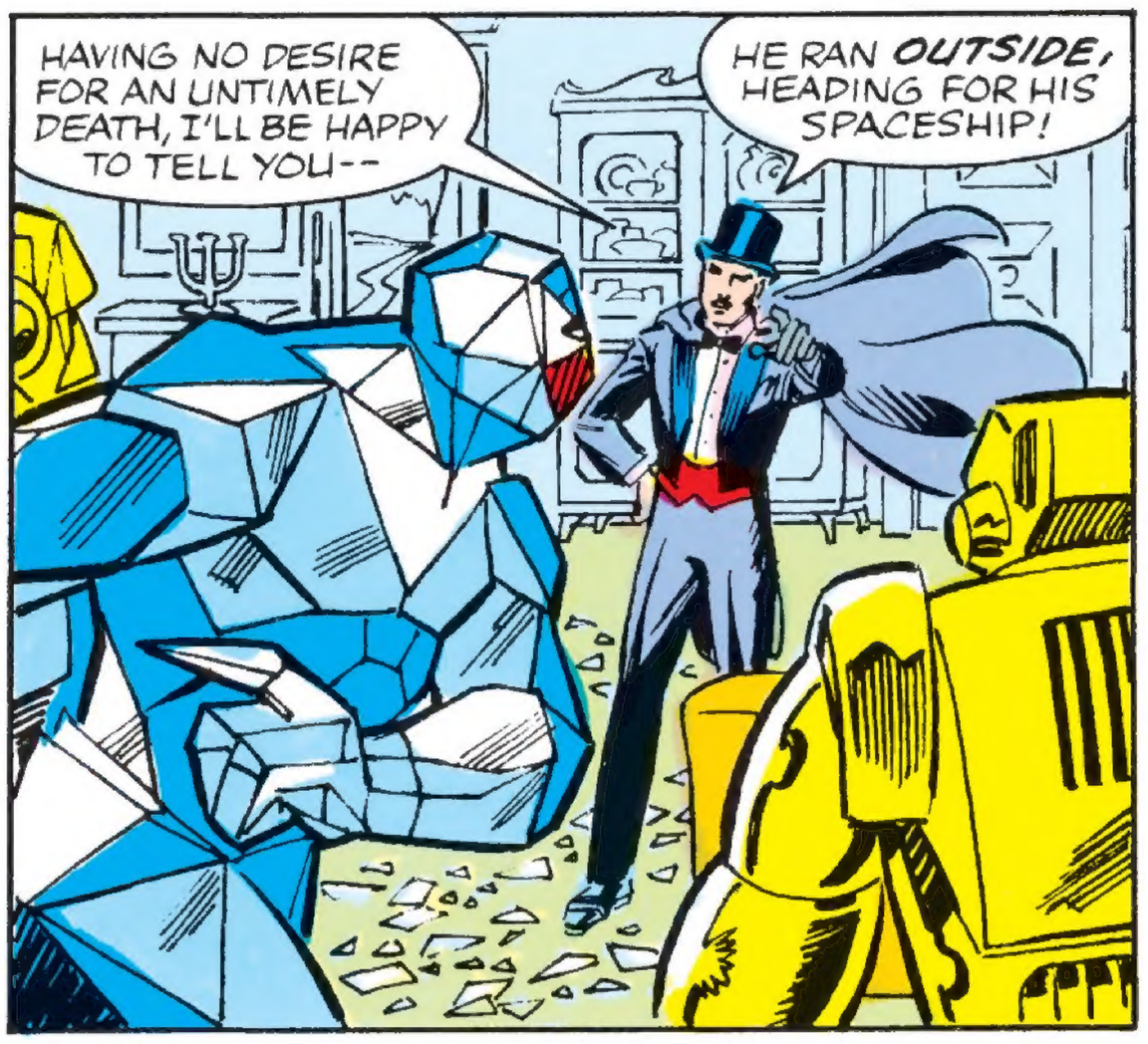

HE'S HALLUCINATING! HE MUST NOT BE EXCITED SO SOON AFTER HIS ACCIDENT!
SLEEP, MY FRIEND, ALL WILL BE WELL.

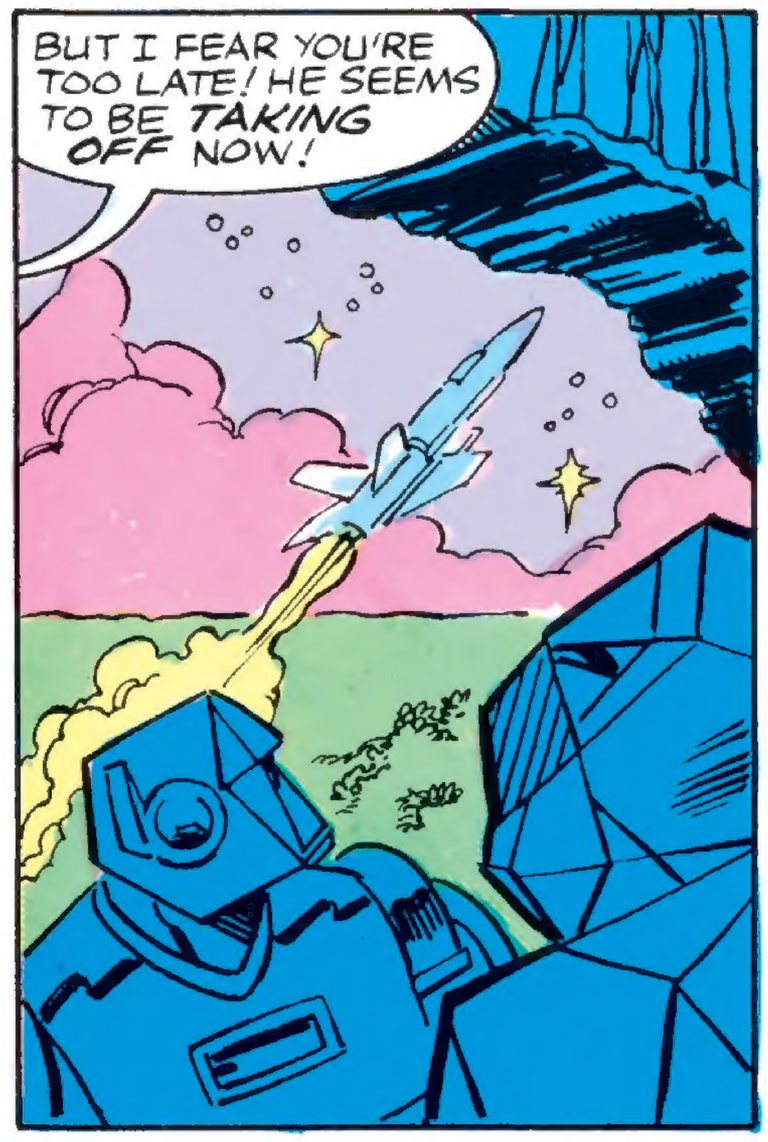
SOMETHING IS GRAVELY WRONG!
WHEN HE AWAKES, WE MUST LEARN WHAT IT IS!
MANDRAKE! THAT NOISE OUTSIDE--!

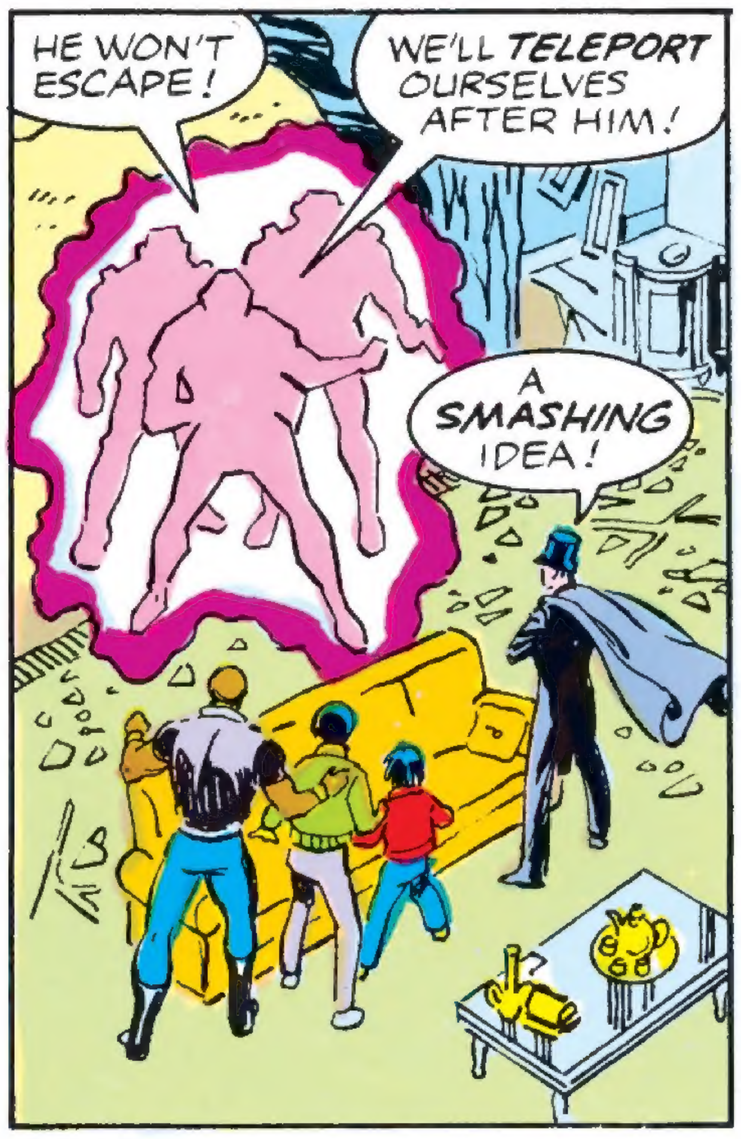

WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!


LOTHAR! PROTECT THE YOUNGSTERS WHILE I --!
ROBOTS! BUT LIKE NONE I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE!
STAND ASIDE, EARTHLING! WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN YOU!
IT IS THE SPACEMAN WE SEEK!

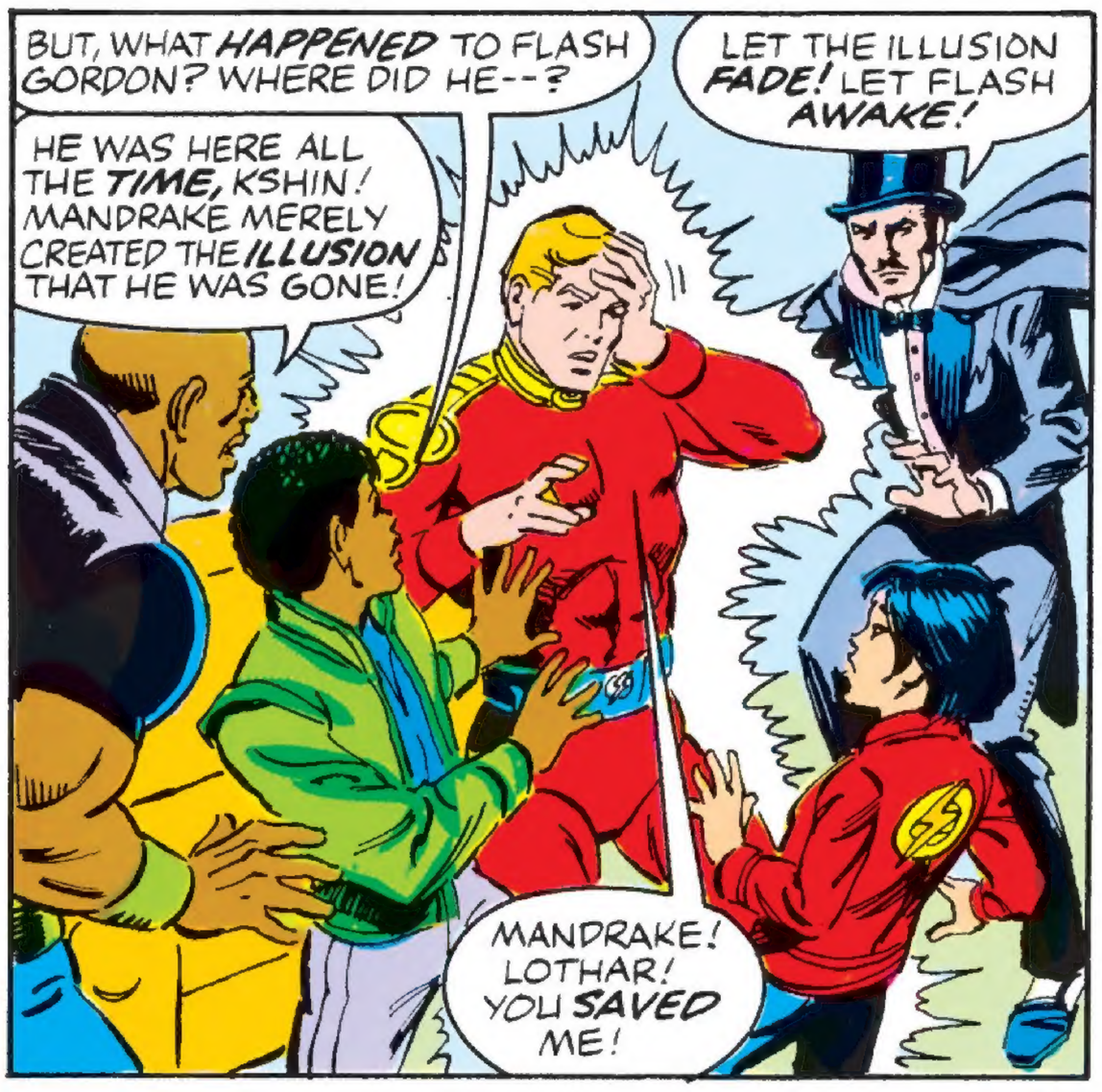
SPACEMAN? THERE IS NO SPACEMAN HERE!
HE WAS HERE! WE SAW HIM!
REVEAL HIS WHERE-ABOUTS, OR DIE!

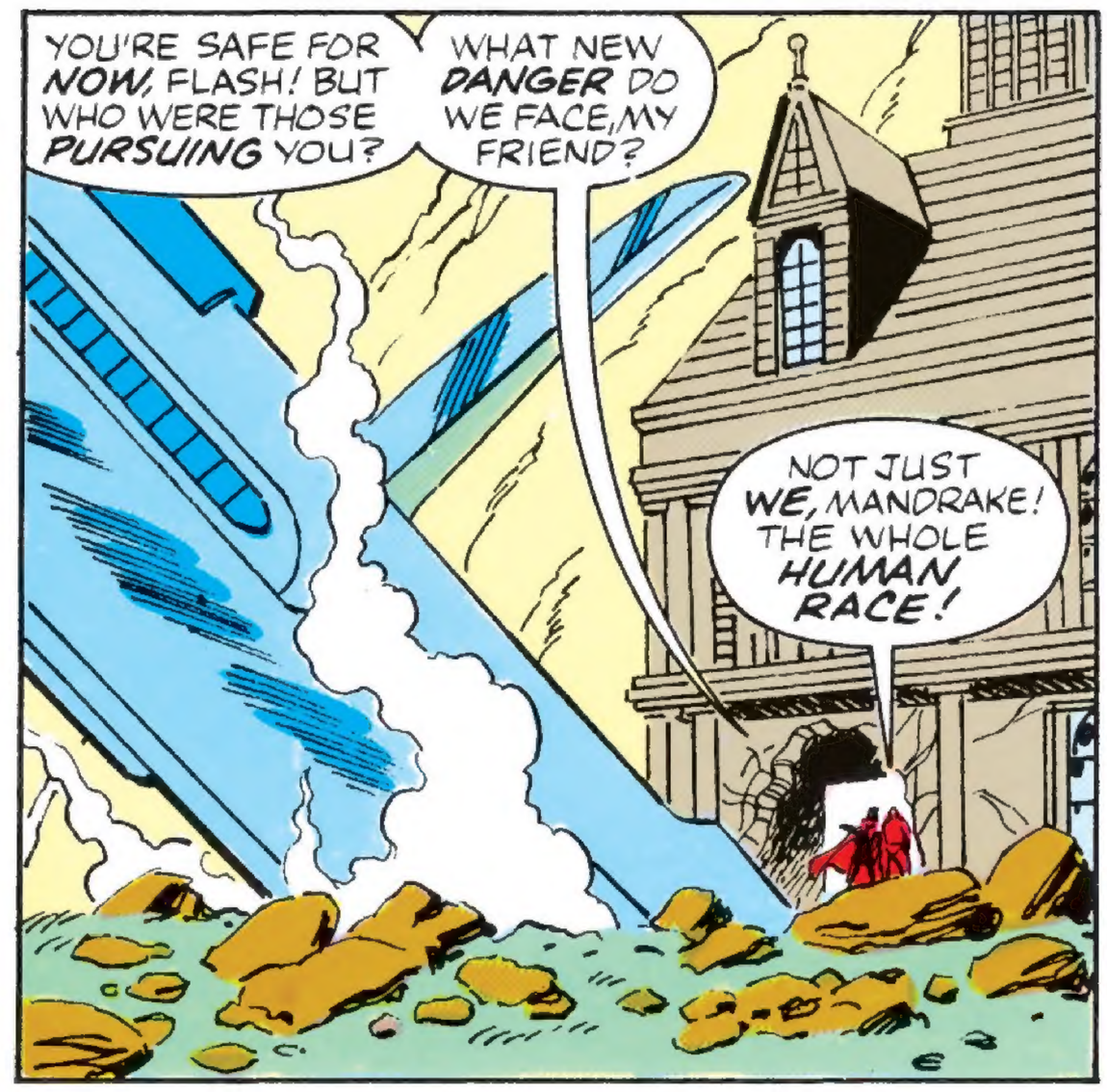

HAVING NO DESIRE FOR AN UNTIMELY DEATH, I'LL BE HAPPY TO TELL YOU--
HE RAN OUTSIDE, HEADING FOR HIS SPACESHIP!

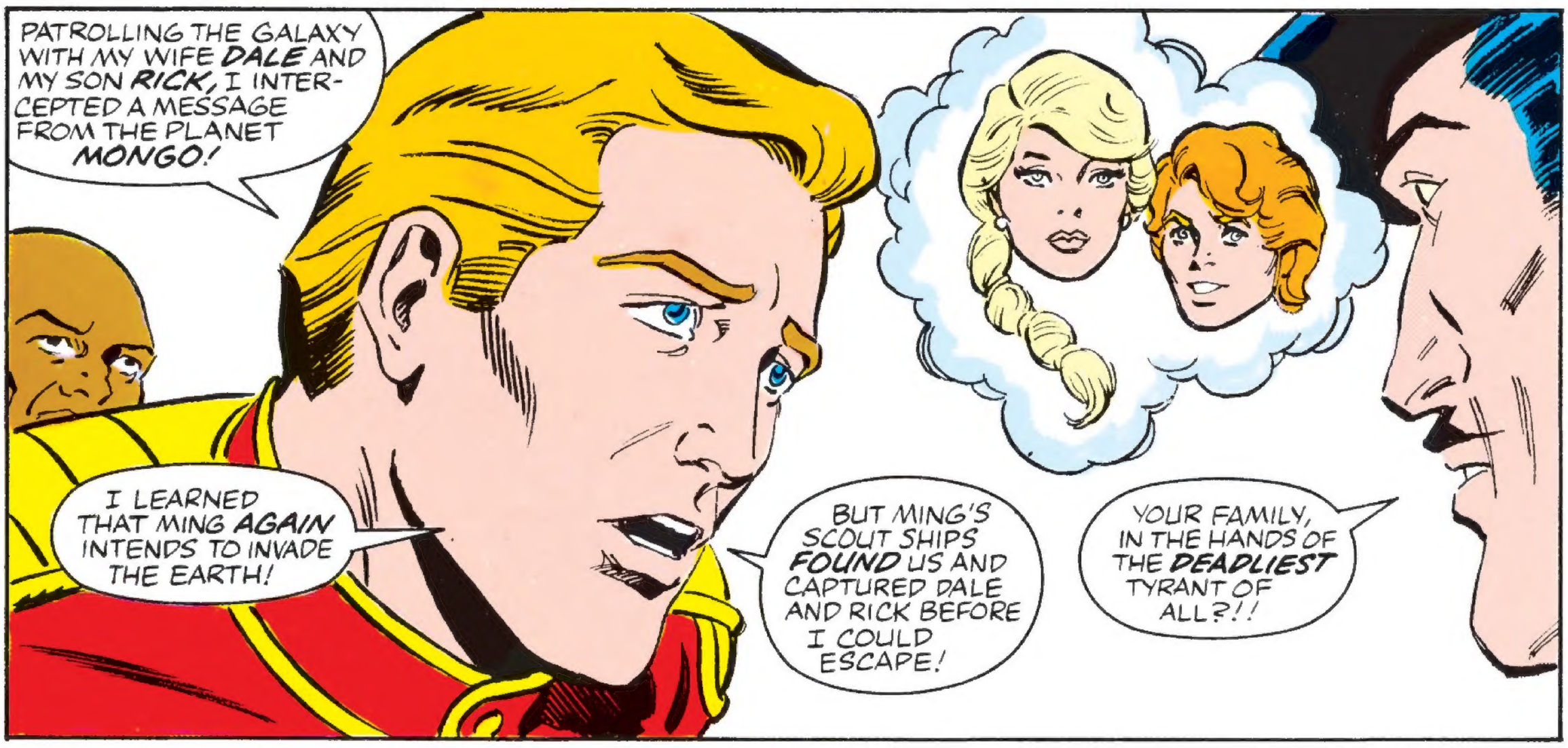

BUT I FEAR YOU'RE TOO LATE! HE SEEMS TO BE TAKING OFF NOW!


HE WON'T ESCAPE!
WE'LL TELEPORT OURSELVES AFTER HIM!
A SMASHING IDEA!

YOU HAVE NOT LOST YOUR TOUCH, MANDRAKE!
IT WAS CHILD'S PLAY, OLD FRIEND! BUT I FEAR THE DANGER IS GREATER THAN WE KNOW!


BUT, WHAT HAPPENED TO FLASH GORDON? WHERE DID HE--?
HE WAS HERE ALL THE TIME, KSHIN! MANDRAKE MERELY CREATED THE ILLUSION THAT HE WAS GONE!
LET THE ILLUSION FADE! LET FLASH AWAKE!
MANDRAKE! LOTHAR! YOU SAVED ME!


YOU'RE SAFE FOR NOW, FLASH! BUT WHO WERE THOSE PURSUING YOU?
WHAT NEW DANGER DO WE FACE, MY FRIEND?
NOT JUST WE, MANDRAKE! THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE!

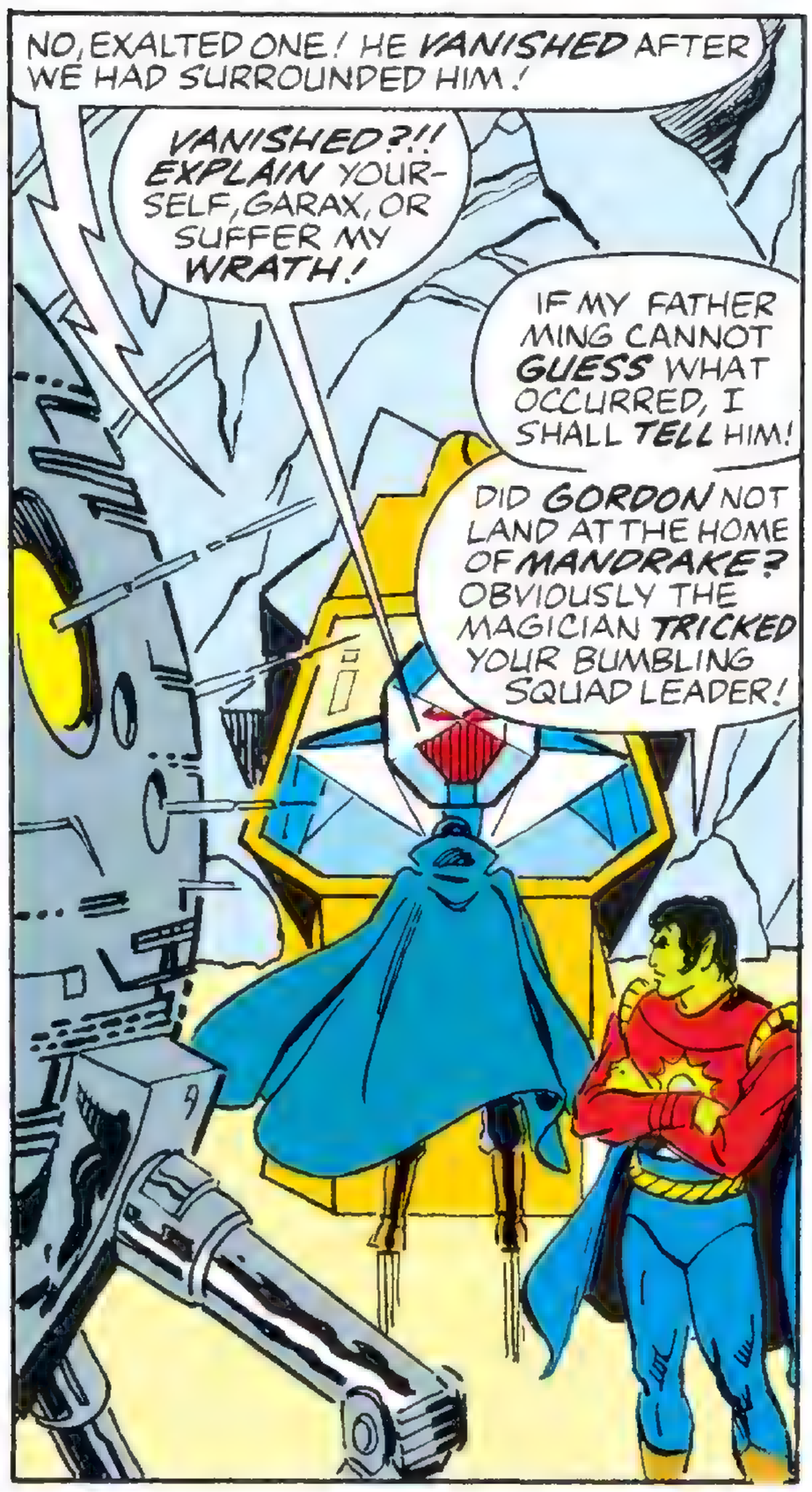

PATROLLING THE GALAXY WITH MY WIFE DALE AND MY SON RICK, I INTERCEPTED A MESSAGE FROM THE PLANET MONGO!
I LEARNED THAT MING AGAIN INTENDS TO INVADE THE EARTH!
BUT MING'S SCOUT SHIPS FOUND US AND CAPTURED DALE AND RICK BEFORE I COULD ESCAPE!
YOUR FAMILY, IN THE HANDS OF THE DEADLIEST TYRANT OF ALL?!!

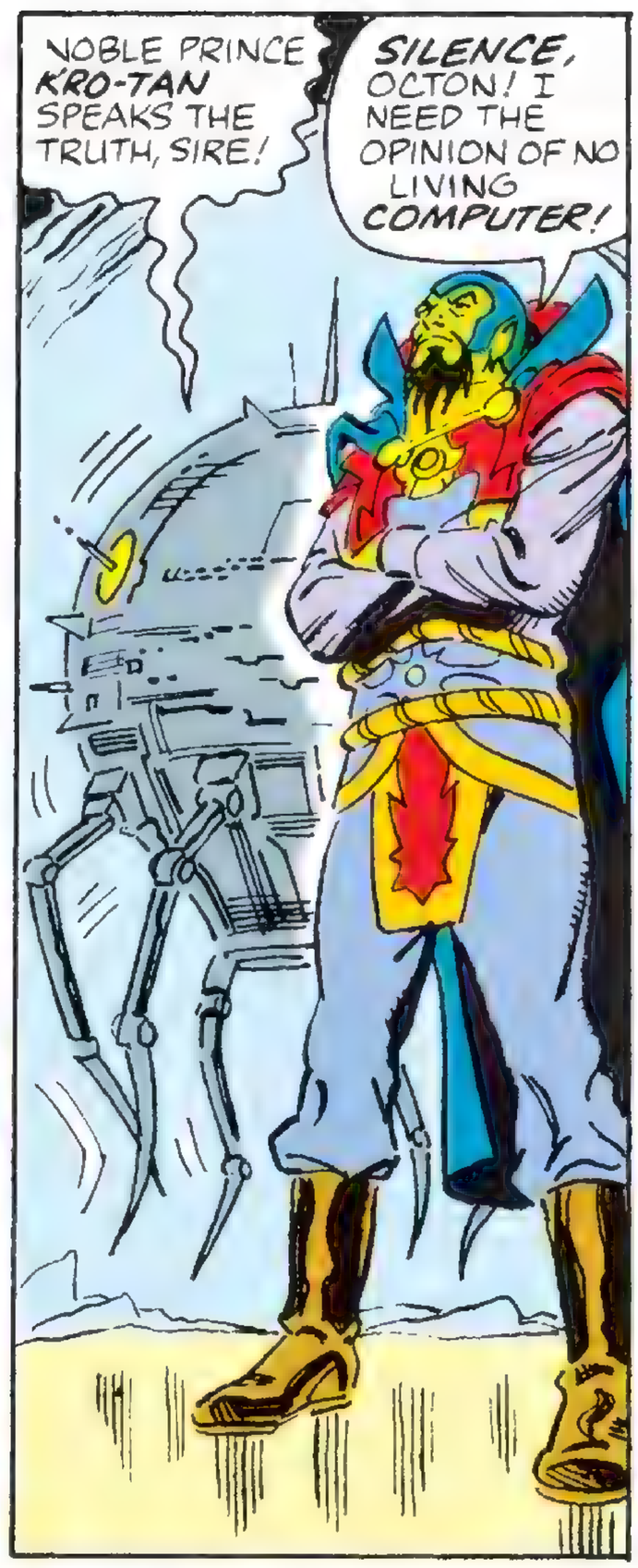
NOW THAT I'VE BROUGHT YOU THE WARNING, I MUST RETURN TO MONGO! EVERY SECOND COUNTS!
HE MUST NOT RETURN ALONE, MANDRAKE!
WE HAVE FOUGHT TOGETHER IN THE PAST--WE SHALL DO SO AGAIN!

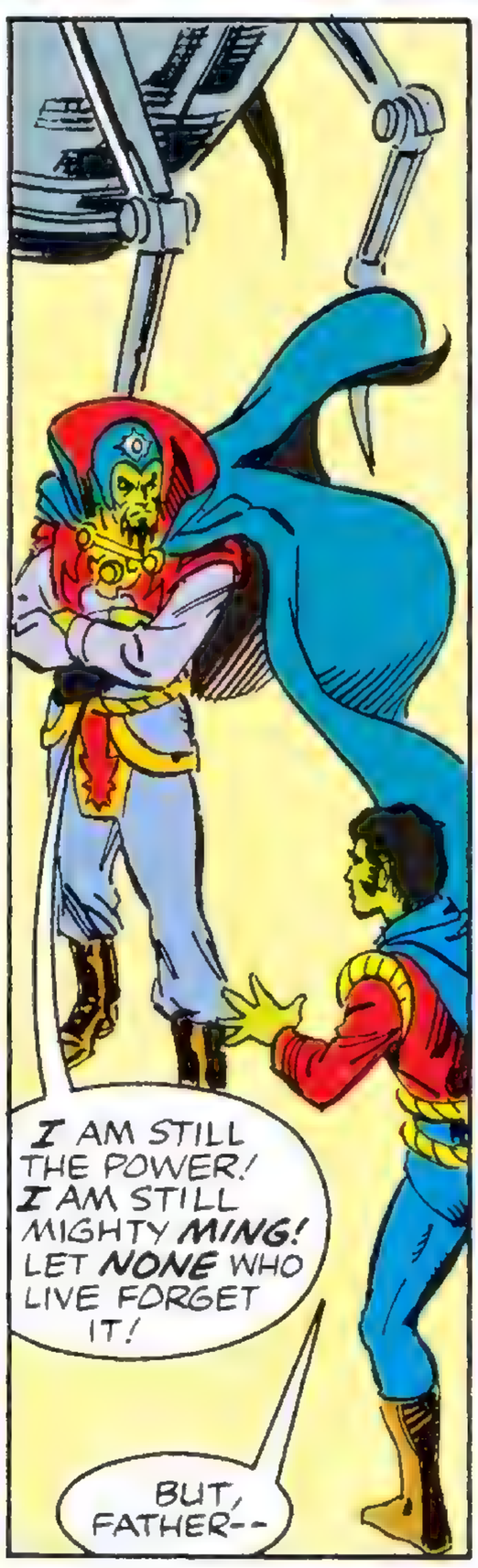
BUT IT WILL BE US AGAINST A PLANET-- THE LEGIONS OF MING ARE THE MIGHTIEST FORCE IN THE GALAXY!
YOU CAN BEAT ANYBODY! I KNOW IT!

PERHAPS, KSHIN! BUT THERE IS TOO MUCH AT STAKE THIS TIME! WE NEED ONE OTHER!
THE GREATEST TRACKER AND HUNTER OF ALL!

MEANWHILE, JUST OUTSIDE OUR SOLAR SYSTEM, ON THE FRIGID REACHES OF THE ICY PLANET MONGO...
SIRE, SQUAD LEADER GARAX BEGS TO REPORT!
SPEAK! HAVE YOU CAPTURED THE ACCURSED FLASH GORDON?

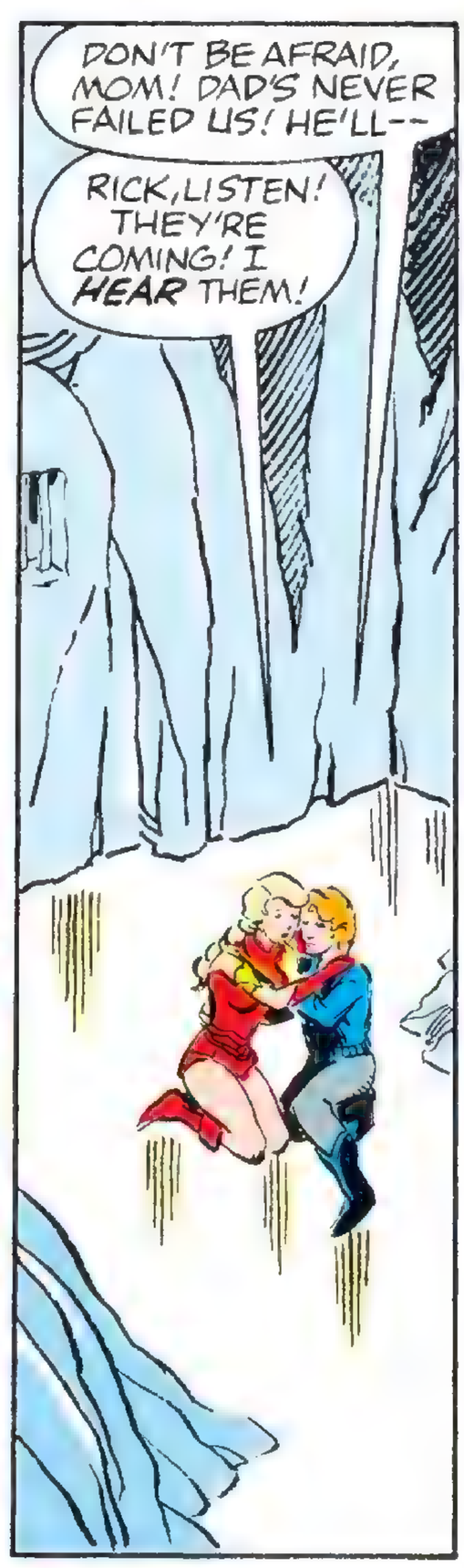

NO, EXALTED ONE! HE VANISHED AFTER WE HAD SURROUNDED HIM!
VANISHED?!! EXPLAIN YOURSELF, GARAX, OR SUFFER MY WRATH!
IF MY FATHER MING CANNOT GUESS WHAT OCCURRED, I SHALL TELL HIM!
DID GORDON NOT LAND AT THE HOME OF MANDRAKE? OBVIOUSLY THE MAGICIAN TRICKED YOUR BUMBLING SQUAD LEADER!

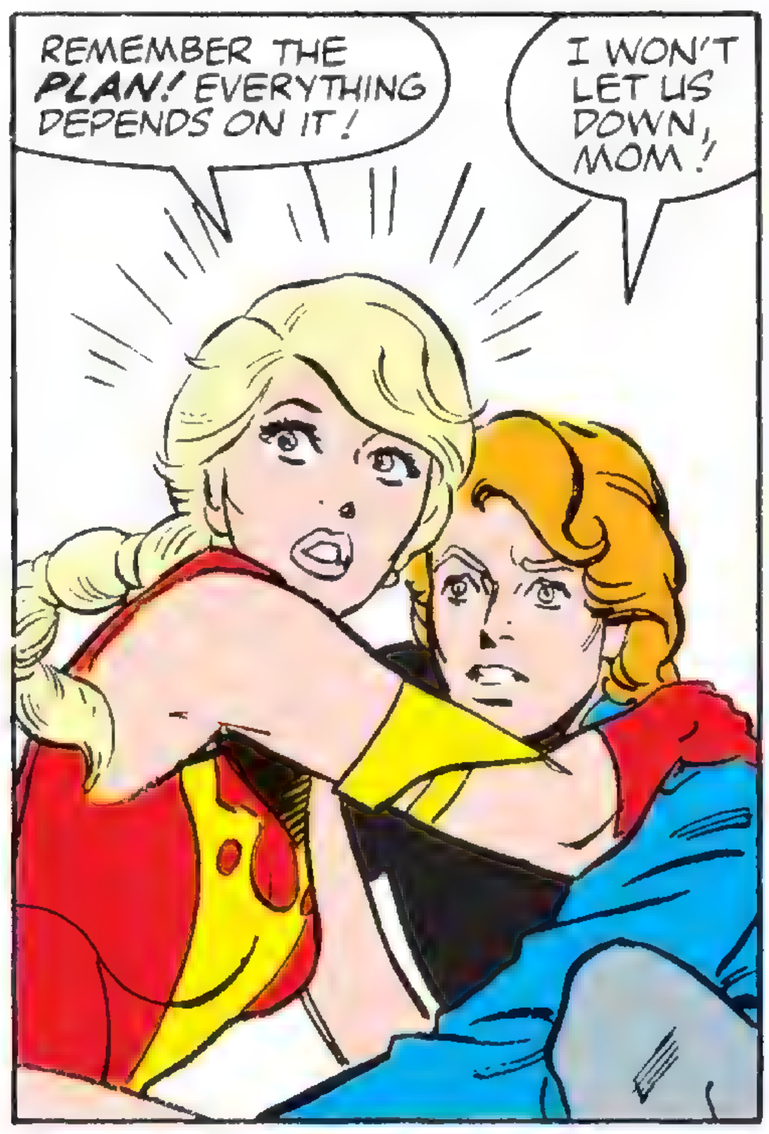

NOBLE PRINCE KRO-TAN SPEAKS THE TRUTH, SIRE!
SILENCE, OCTON! I NEED THE OPINION OF NO LIVING COMPUTER!


I AM STILL THE POWER! I AM STILL MIGHTY MING! LET NONE WHO LIVE FORGET IT!
BUT, FATHER--

AND YOU TOO, PRINCE KRO-TAN, WILL SPEAK ONLY WHEN SPOKEN TO!

FLASH GORDON WILL NOT ELUDE ME FOR LONG-- NOT WHEN I HOLD HIS WIFE AND SON CAPTIVE!
BY MY COMMAND, HAVE THEM BROUGHT TO ME--AT ONCE!

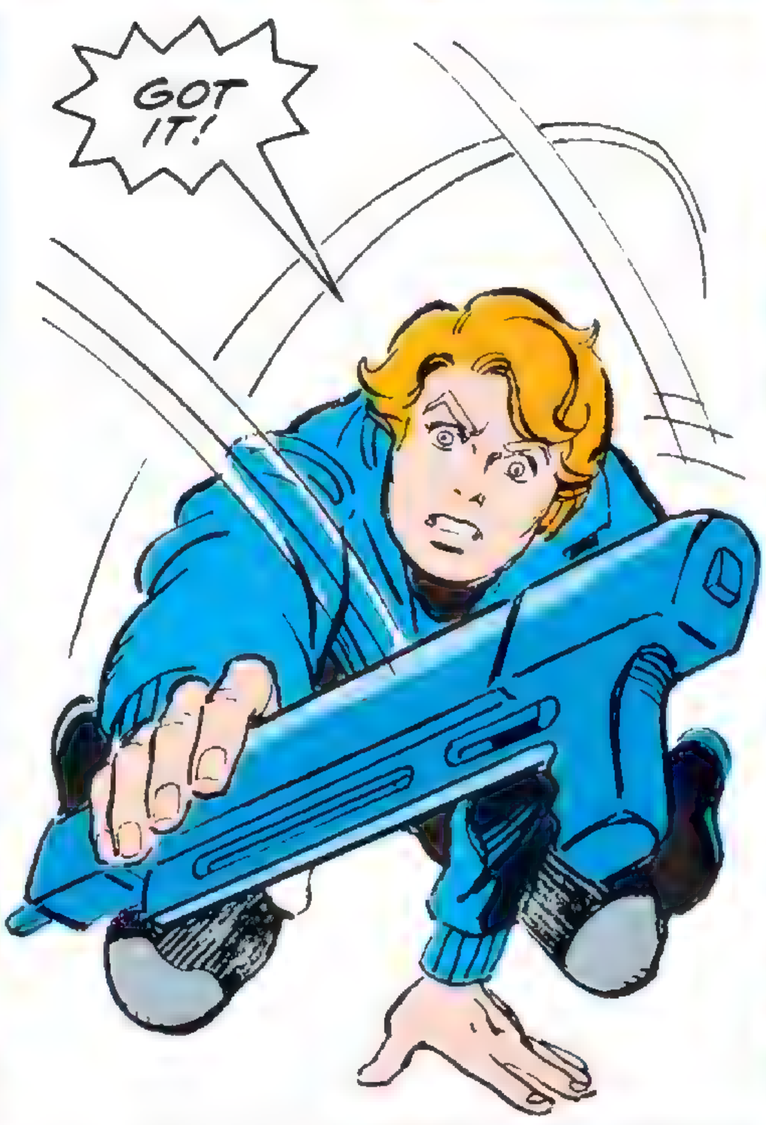

DON'T BE AFRAID, MOM! DAD'S NEVER FAILED US! HE'LL--
RICK, LISTEN! THEY'RE COMING! I HEAR THEM!


REMEMBER THE PLAN! EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON IT!
I WON'T LET US DOWN, MOM!

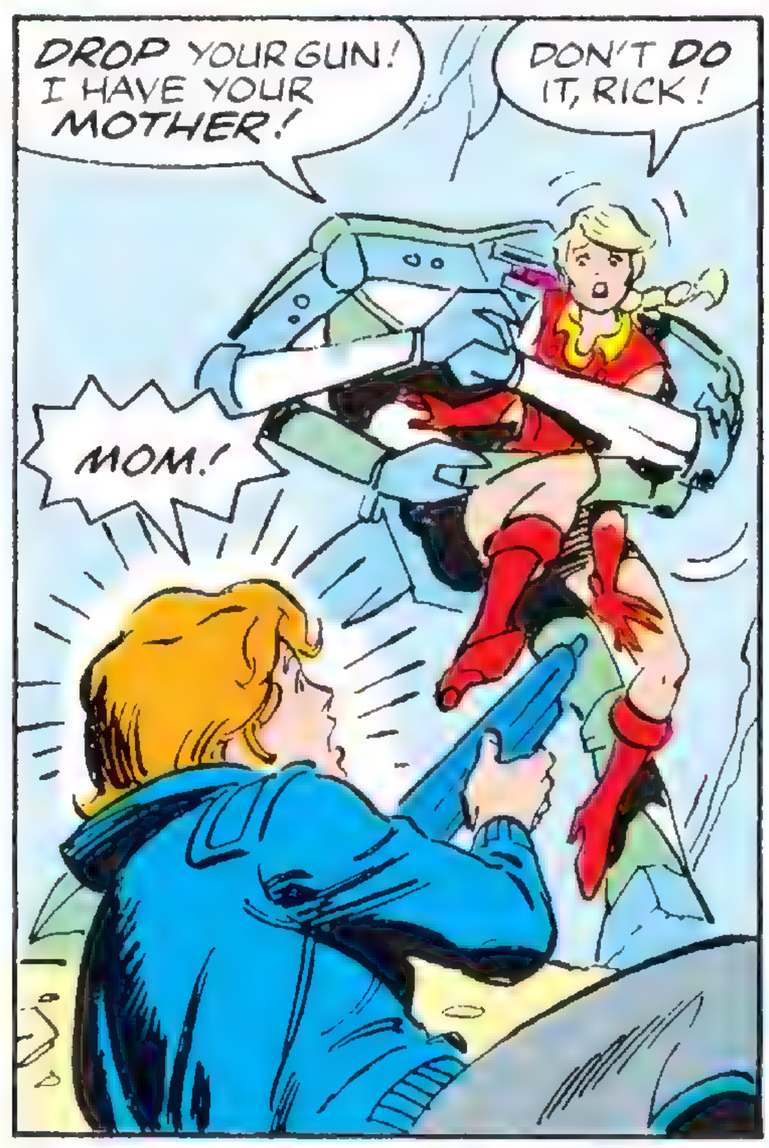
LOOK! THE BOY IS ALONE!
THE FEMALE ESCAPED!
QUICK! INSIDE THE CELL!

NO SOONER IS THE DOOR UNLOCKED, WHEN...

THE GUN, RICK! GET THE GUN!


GOT IT!

NOTHING'LL STOP US NOW!


DROP YOUR GUN! I HAVE YOUR MOTHER!
DON'T DO IT, RICK!
MOM!

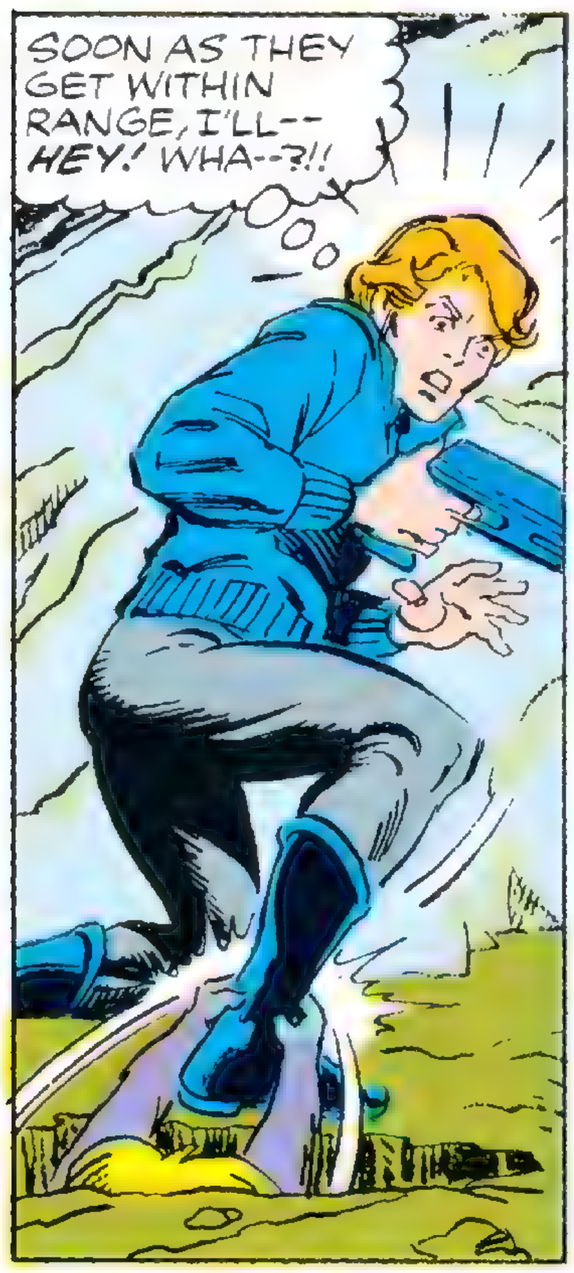
RUN, RICK! SAVE YOURSELF! YOU STILL CAN MAKE IT!
NO! I WON'T LEAVE YOU!
YOU MUST! I BEG YOU-- RUN!

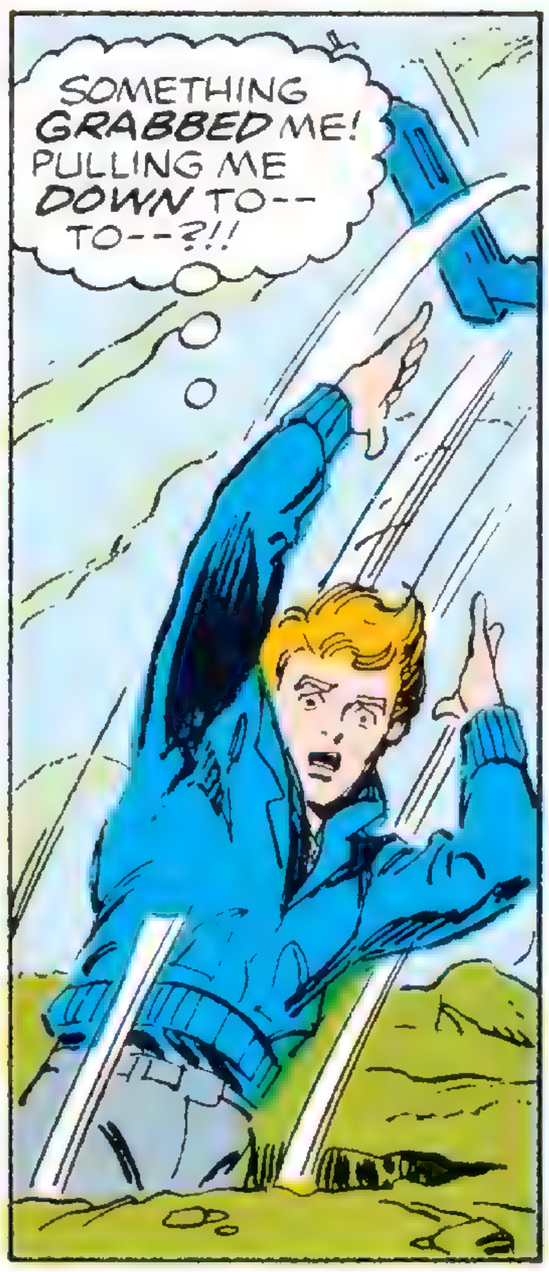
FOR YOUR-SELF-- FOR YOUR DAD-- FOR PLANET EARTH! YOU'VE GOT NO CHOICE!
BUT I'LL BE BACK FOR YOU--I SWEAR IT! DAD'N ME WILL BOTH BE BACK!

HE MUST BE CAUGHT! BY MING'S COMMAND!
HE RUNS INTO THE ICE CAVE! THERE IS NO WAY OUT!

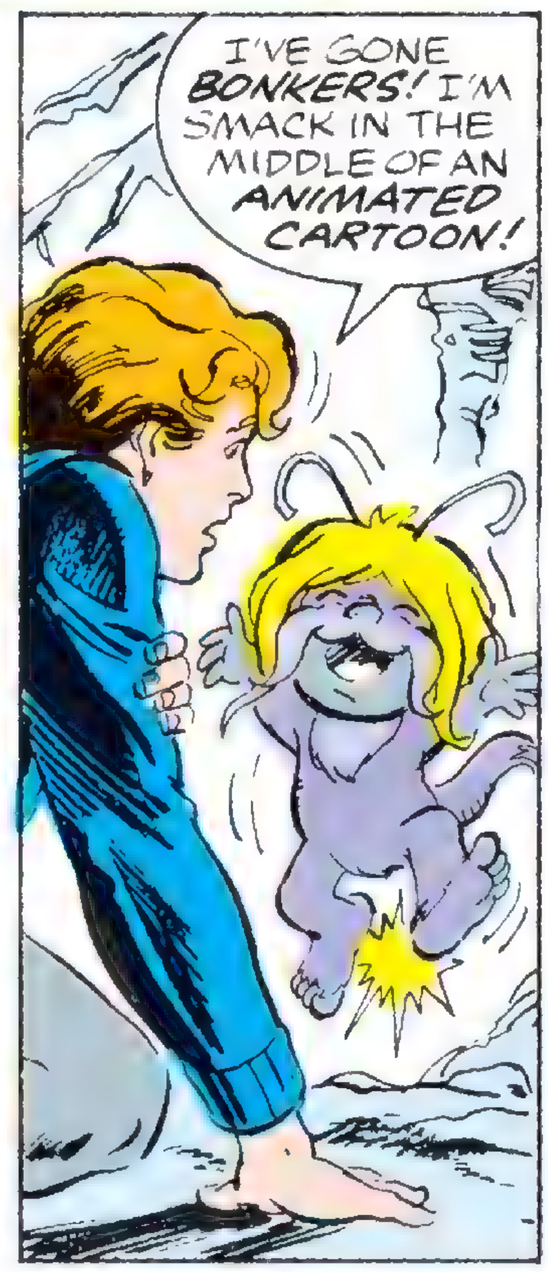
DAD TAUGHT ME THERE'S ALWAYS A WAY OUT, SO LONG AS YOU KEEP TRYING!
I CAN'T FAIL NOW-- FOR MOM'S SAKE!

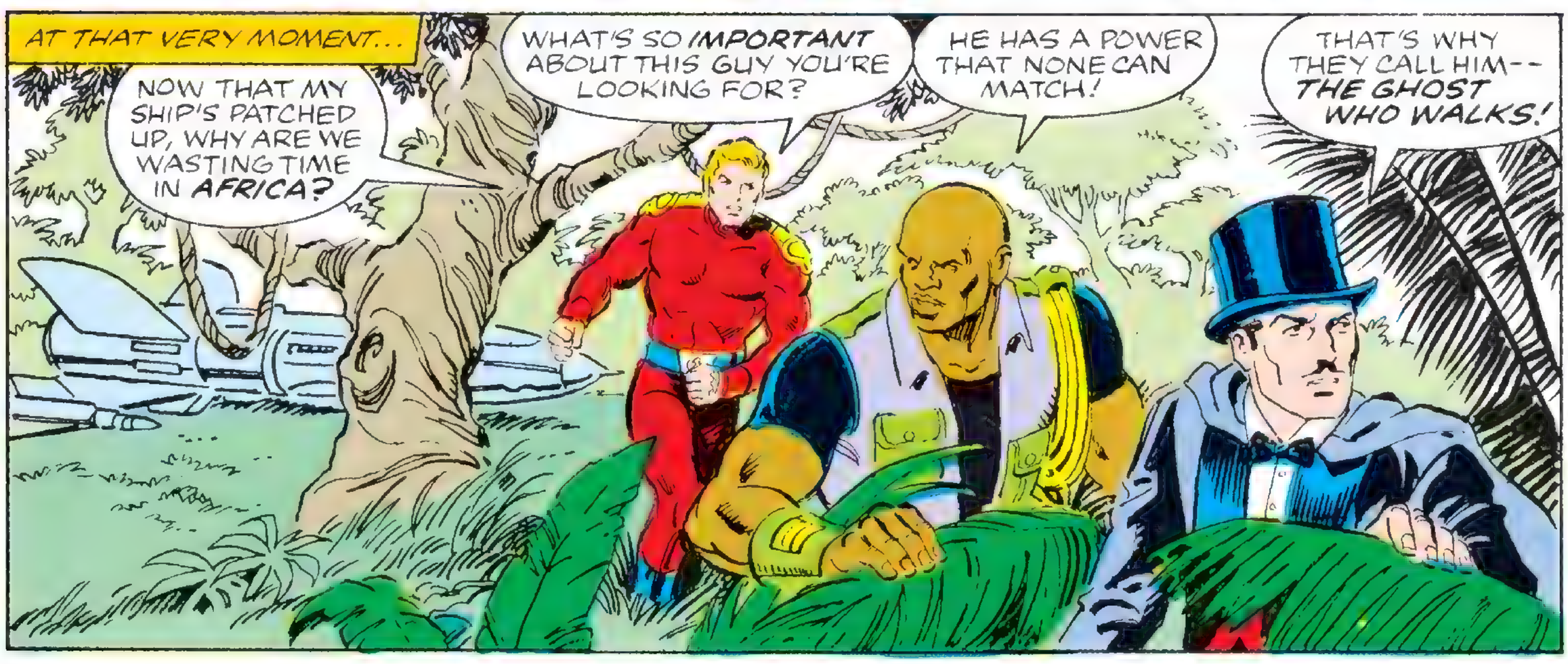
MOVE WITH CAUTION! SEARCH EVERY CREVICE!
TIME IS ON OUR SIDE! HE CANNOT ESCAPE!
I WISH I KNEW HOW MANY ROUNDS THIS BLASTER HOLDS!

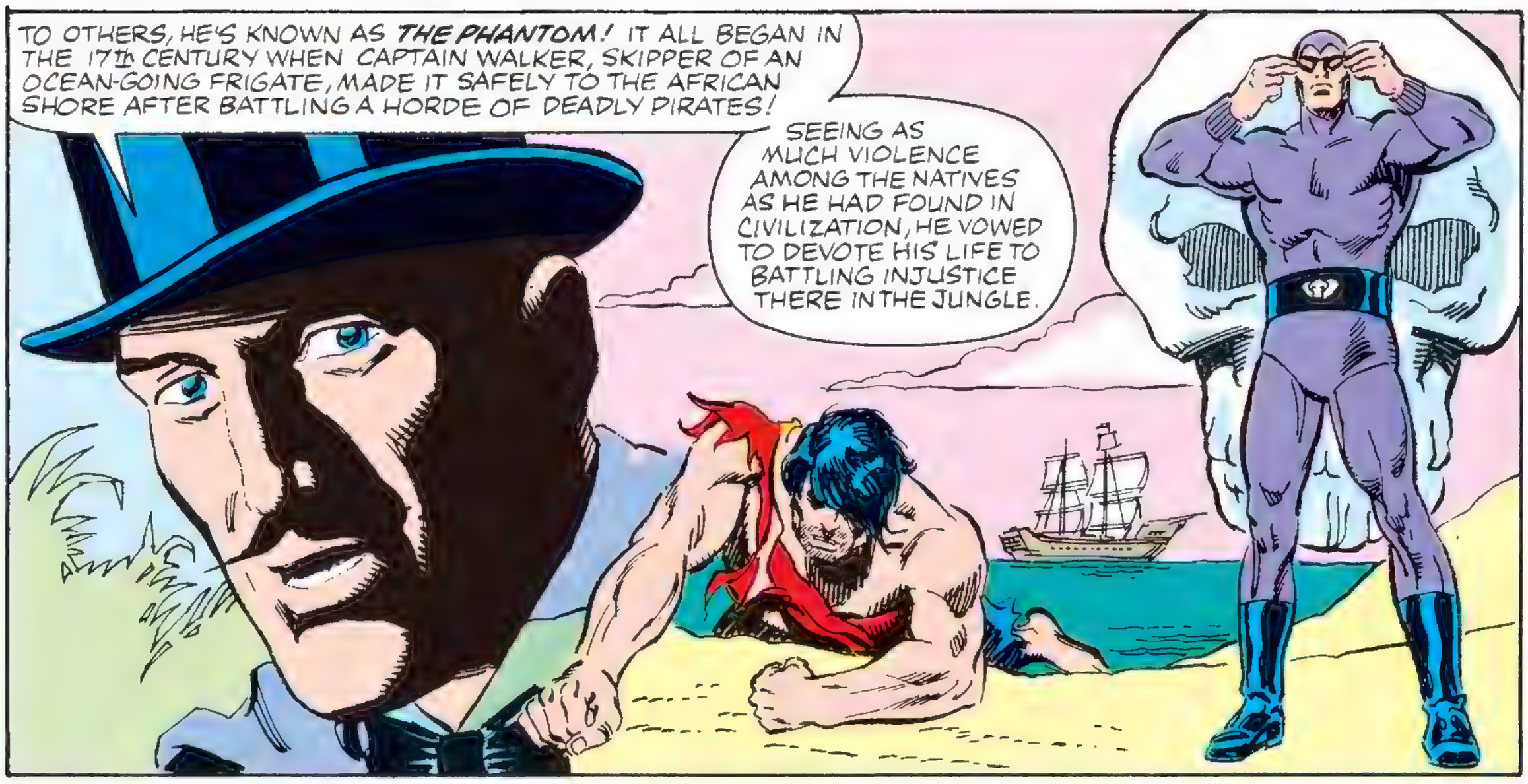

SOON AS THEY GET WITHIN RANGE, I'LL-- HEY! WHA--?!!

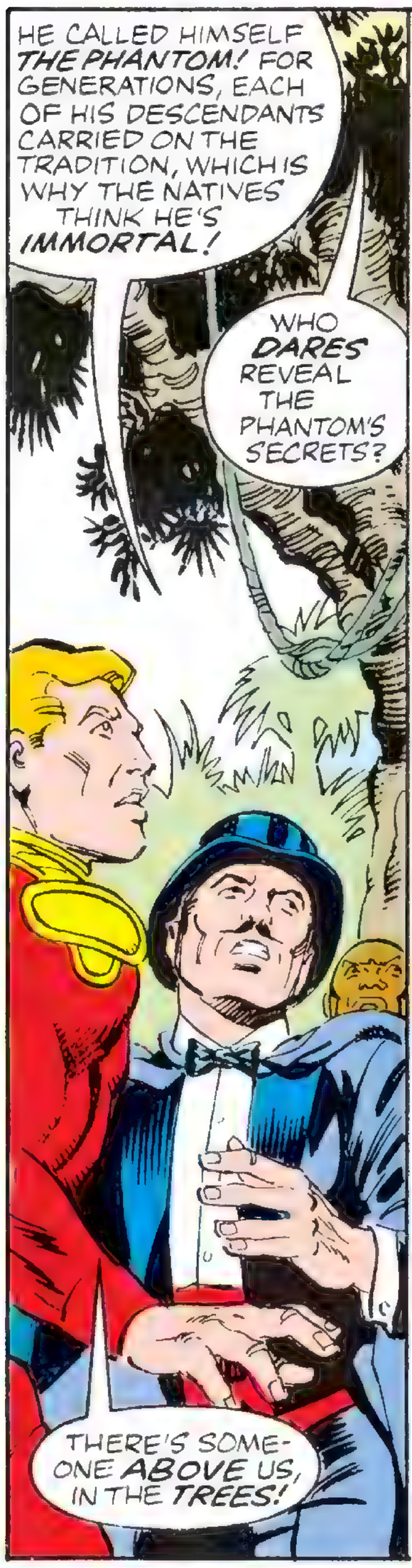

SOMETHING GRABBED ME! PULLING ME DOWN TO-- TO--?!!

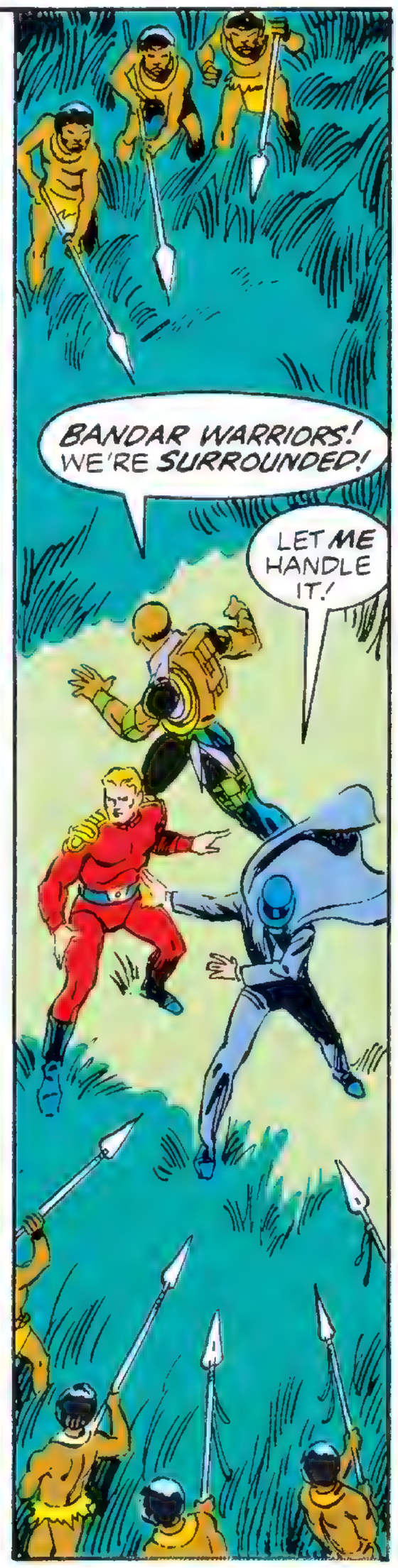
THAT HOLE WASN'T THERE A SECOND AGO!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON? DID SOME-ONE TRY TO SAVE ME, OR--?


I'VE GONE BONKERS! I'M SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ANIMATED CARTOON!

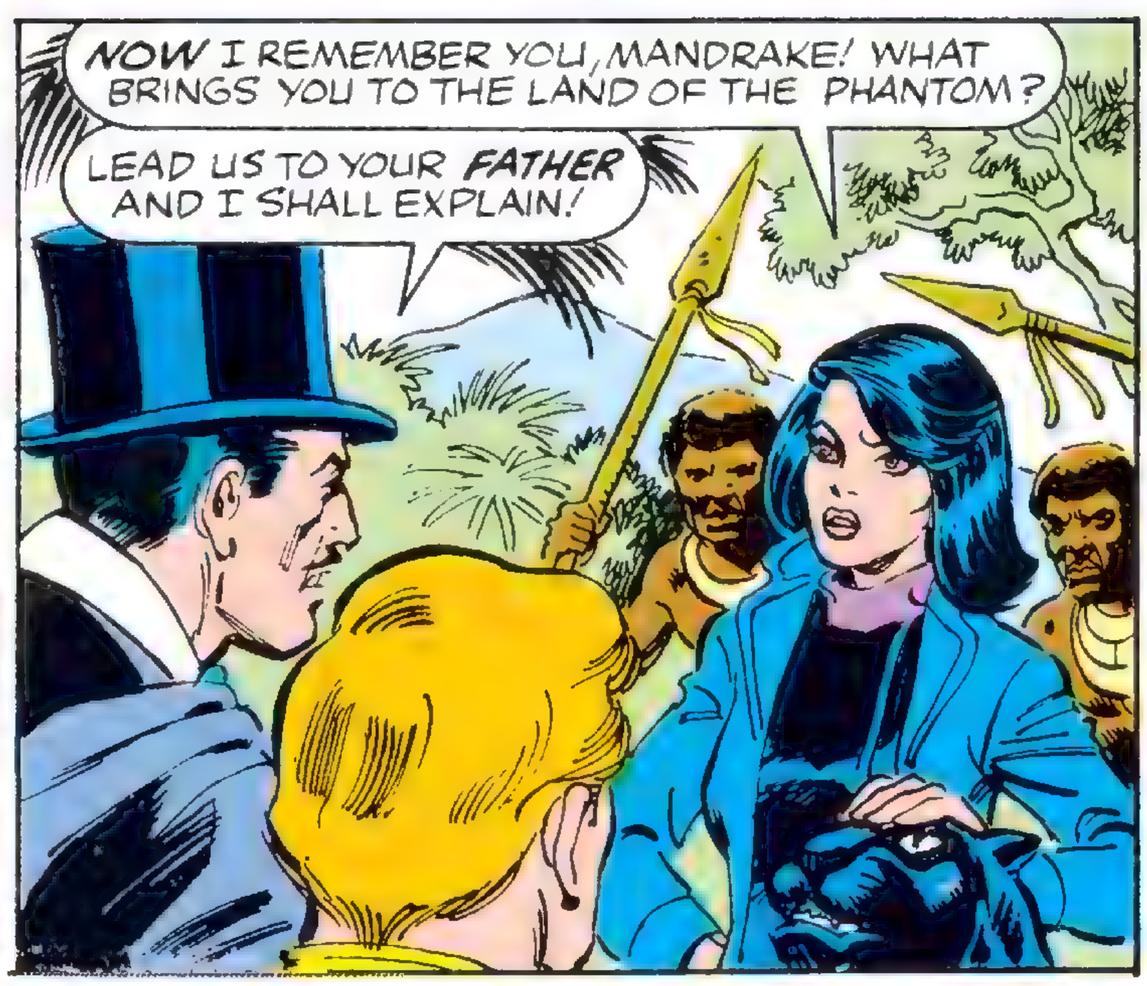

AT THAT VERY MOMENT...
NOW THAT MY SHIP'S PATCHED UP, WHY ARE WE WASTING TIME IN AFRICA?
WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT THIS GUY YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?
HE HAS A POWER THAT NONE CAN MATCH!
THAT'S WHY THEY CALL HIM-- THE GHOST WHO WALKS!

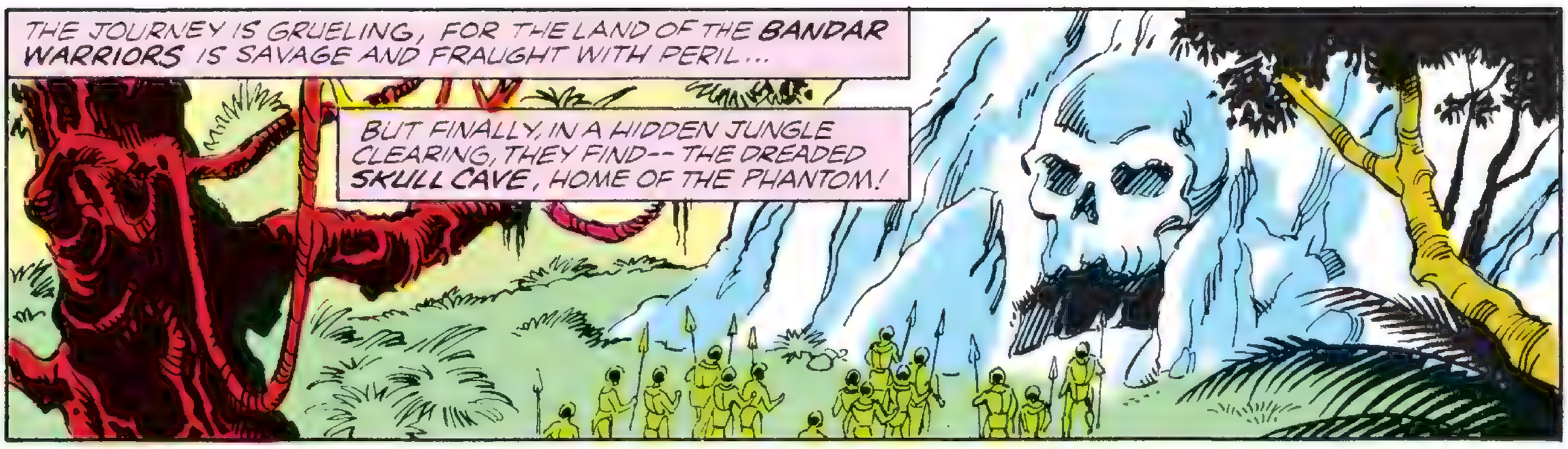

TO OTHERS, HE'S KNOWN AS THE PHANTOM! IT ALL BEGAN IN THE 17th CENTURY WHEN CAPTAIN WALKER, SKIPPER OF AN OCEAN-GOING FRIGATE, MADE IT SAFELY TO THE AFRICAN SHORE AFTER BATTLING A HORDE OF DEADLY PIRATES!
SEEING AS MUCH VIOLENCE AMONG THE NATIVES AS HE HAD FOUND IN CIVILIZATION, HE VOWED TO DEVOTE HIS LIFE TO BATTLING INJUSTICE THERE IN THE JUNGLE.

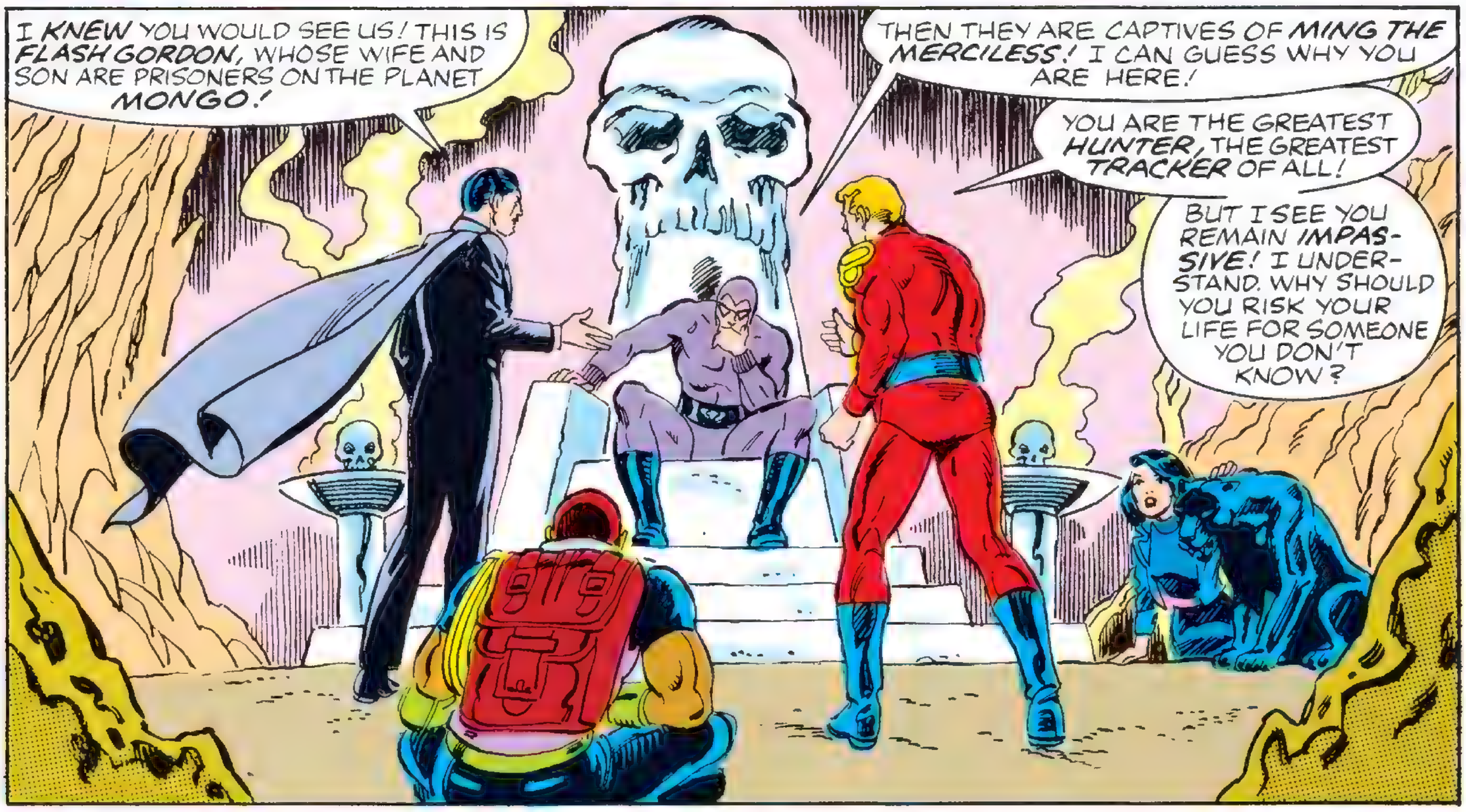

HE CALLED HIMSELF THE PHANTOM! FOR GENERATIONS, EACH OF HIS DESCENDANTS CARRIED ON THE TRADITION, WHICH IS WHY THE NATIVES THINK HE'S IMMORTAL!
WHO DARES REVEAL THE PHANTOM'S SECRETS?
THERE'S SOMEONE ABOVE US, IN THE TREES!

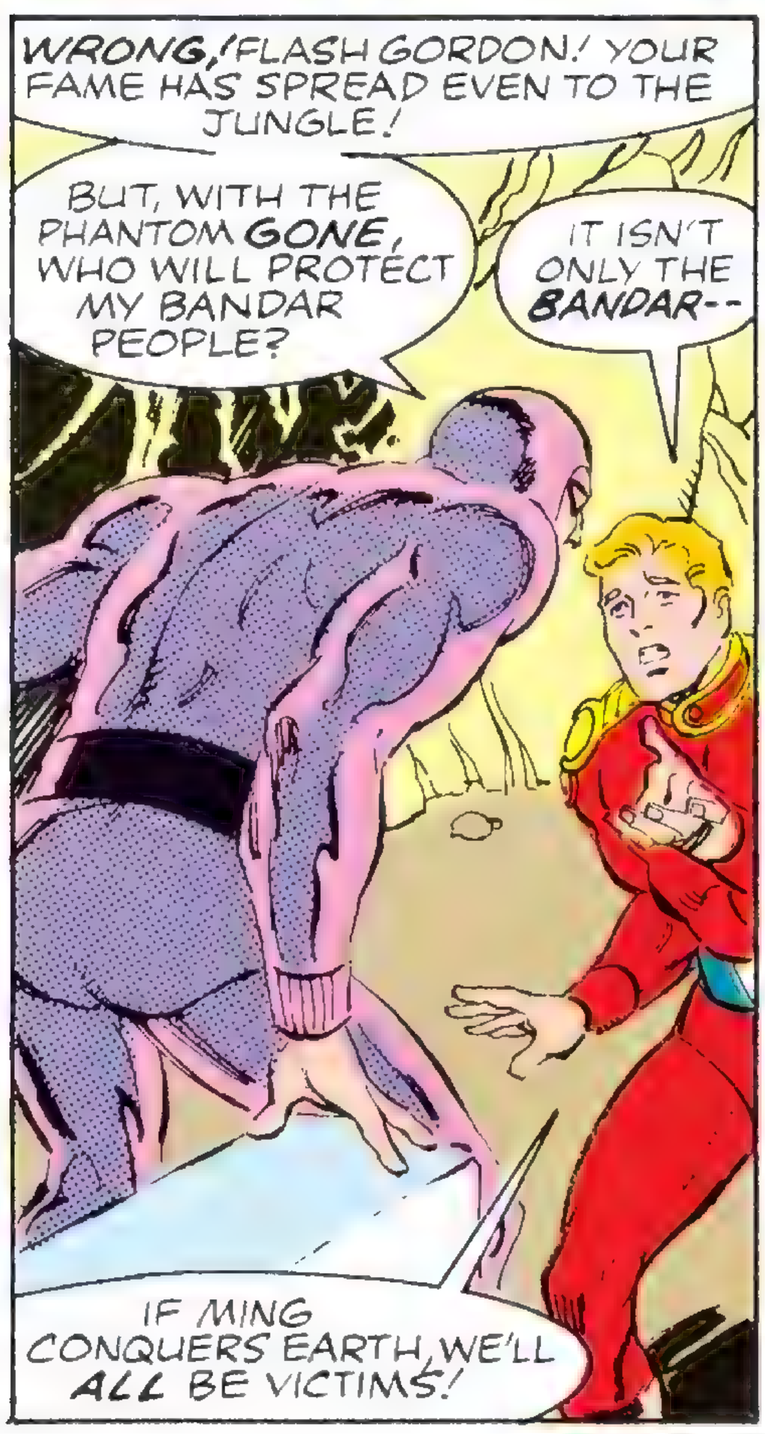

BANDAR WARRIORS! WE'RE SURROUNDED!
LET ME HANDLE IT!

NO! I WILL HANDLE IT! I AM JEDDA, DAUGHTER OF THE GHOST WHO WALKS!
JEDDA, YOU WERE A CHILD WHEN LAST WE MET!
STAND BACK, OR KISA, MY PANTHER, WILL ATTACK YOU!
NO ONE REMAINS A CHILD FOREVER!


NOW I REMEMBER YOU, MANDRAKE! WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE LAND OF THE PHANTOM?
LEAD US TO YOUR FATHER AND I SHALL EXPLAIN!


THE JOURNEY IS GRUELING, FOR THE LAND OF THE BANDAR WARRIORS IS SAVAGE AND FRAUGHT WITH PERIL...
BUT FINALLY, IN A HIDDEN JUNGLE CLEARING, THEY FIND-- THE DREADED SKULL CAVE, HOME OF THE PHANTOM!


I KNEW YOU WOULD SEE US! THIS IS FLASH GORDON, WHOSE WIFE AND SON ARE PRISONERS ON THE PLANET MONGO!
THEN THEY ARE CAPTIVES OF MING THE MERCILESS! I CAN GUESS WHY YOU ARE HERE!
YOU ARE THE GREATEST HUNTER, THE GREATEST TRACKER OF ALL!
BUT I SEE YOU REMAIN IMPASSIVE! I UNDERSTAND. WHY SHOULD YOU RISK YOUR LIFE FOR SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW?


WRONG, FLASH GORDON! YOUR FAME HAS SPREAD EVEN TO THE JUNGLE!
BUT, WITH THE PHANTOM GONE, WHO WILL PROTECT MY BANDAR PEOPLE?
IT ISN'T ONLY THE BANDAR--
IF MING CONQUERS EARTH, WE'LL ALL BE VICTIMS!

SAY NO MORE! THE PHANTOM WILL JOIN YOU!
BUT I MUST MAKE PLANS FOR MY DAUGHTER I DO NOT WISH JEDDA TO STAY HERE ALONE!
I UNDERSTAND.

THAT'S NOT FAIR! I'M NO LONGER A CHILD! YOU DON'T HAVE TO--
EVEN THE GHOST WHO WALKS HAS A FATHER'S HEART!

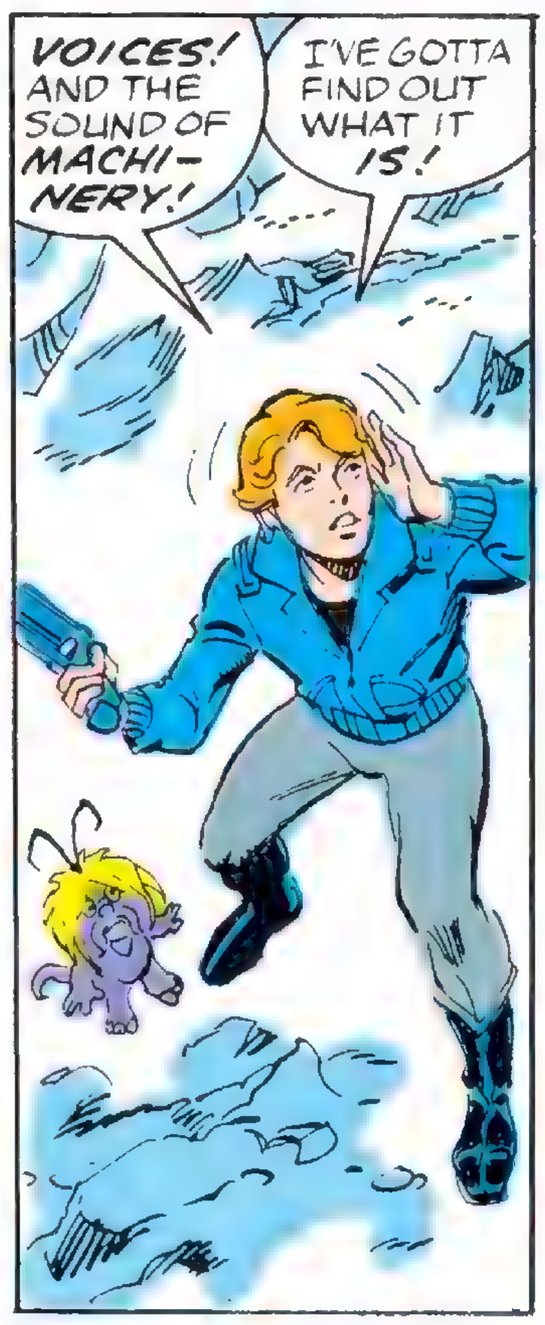
AND SO IT IS THAT SOMETIME LATER, THREE YOUNGSTERS AND A MIGHTY PANTHER WATCH A GLEAMING STARSHIP STREAK INTO THE ENDLESS COSMOS...
WILL THEY MAKE IT LJ?
THEY'VE GOT TO, KSHIN-- FOR ALL OF US!

HEY, LIGHTEN UP, JEDDA! THEY'LL BE OKAY!
OF COURSE THEY WILL! THE PHANTOM NEVER FAILS!
BUT WHY WAS I LEFT BEHIND WITH CHILDREN WHEN MY PLACE IS WITH MY FATHER?

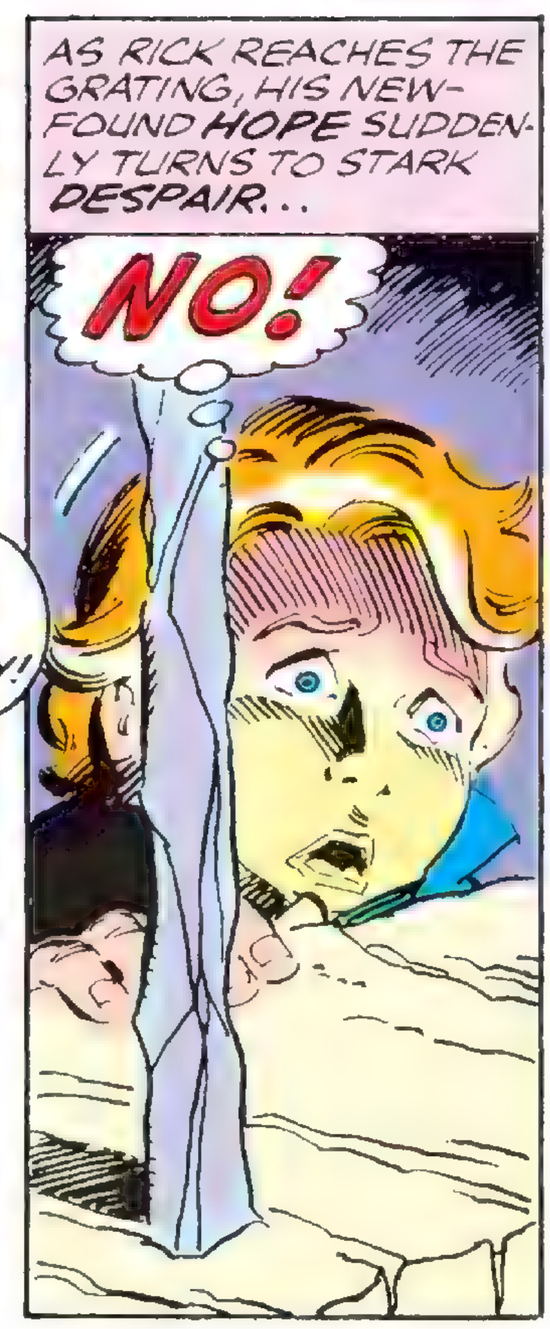
KSHIN, WE'RE GONNA HAVE OUR HANDS FULL WITH THIS ONE!
AW, SHE'LL GET OVER IT! LET'S MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE BIG CAT!

MEANWHILE, BACK ON MONGO...
YOU SAVED MY LIFE, LITTLE FELLA, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL TAG ALONG!
ANYWAY, IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE I COULD GET RID OF YOU IF I TRIED!
THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY OUT OF THESE CAVERNS!
HEY! WHERE'S THAT LIGHT COMING FROM UP AHEAD?

A GRATING! WITH LIGHT BEHIND IT!
THAT'S MY TICKET OUT OF HERE!


VOICES! AND THE SOUND OF MACHINERY!
I'VE GOTTA FIND OUT WHAT IT IS!

HOLD TIGHT, LITTLE FELLA! HEY, YOU NEED A NAME!
I'LL CALL YOU ZUFFY!
EASY, ZUFFY! THAT LEG'S ATTACHED!

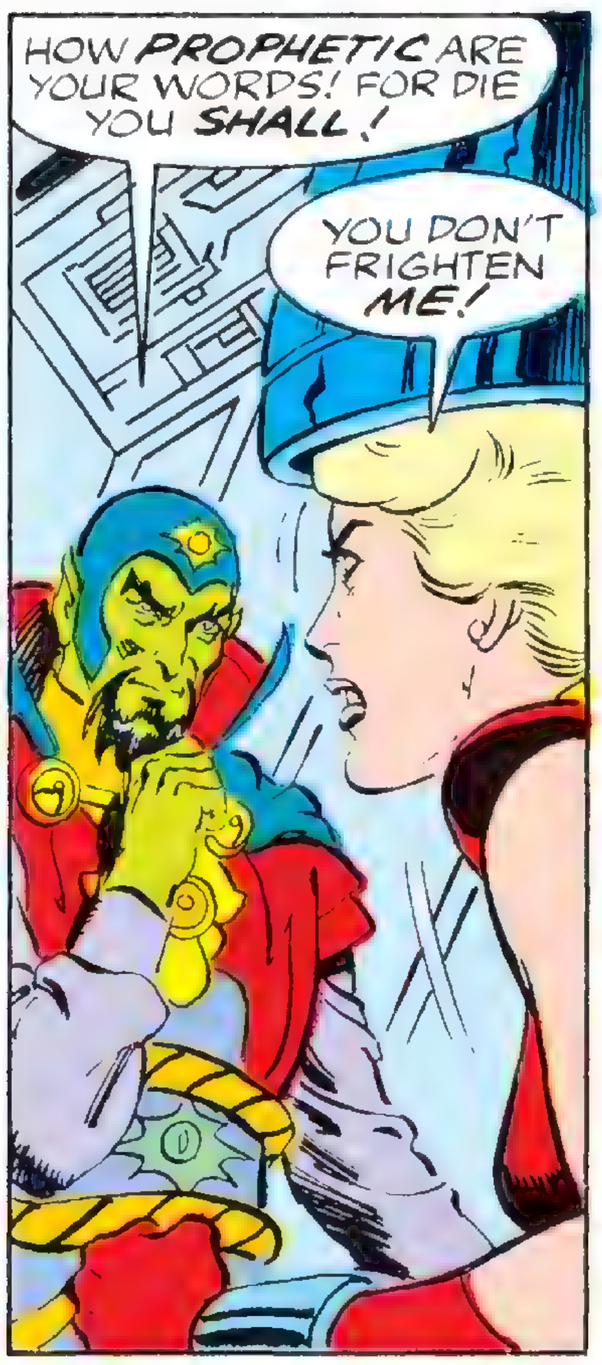

AS RICK REACHES THE GRATING, HIS NEW-FOUND HOPE SUDDENLY TURNS TO STARK DESPAIR...
NO!

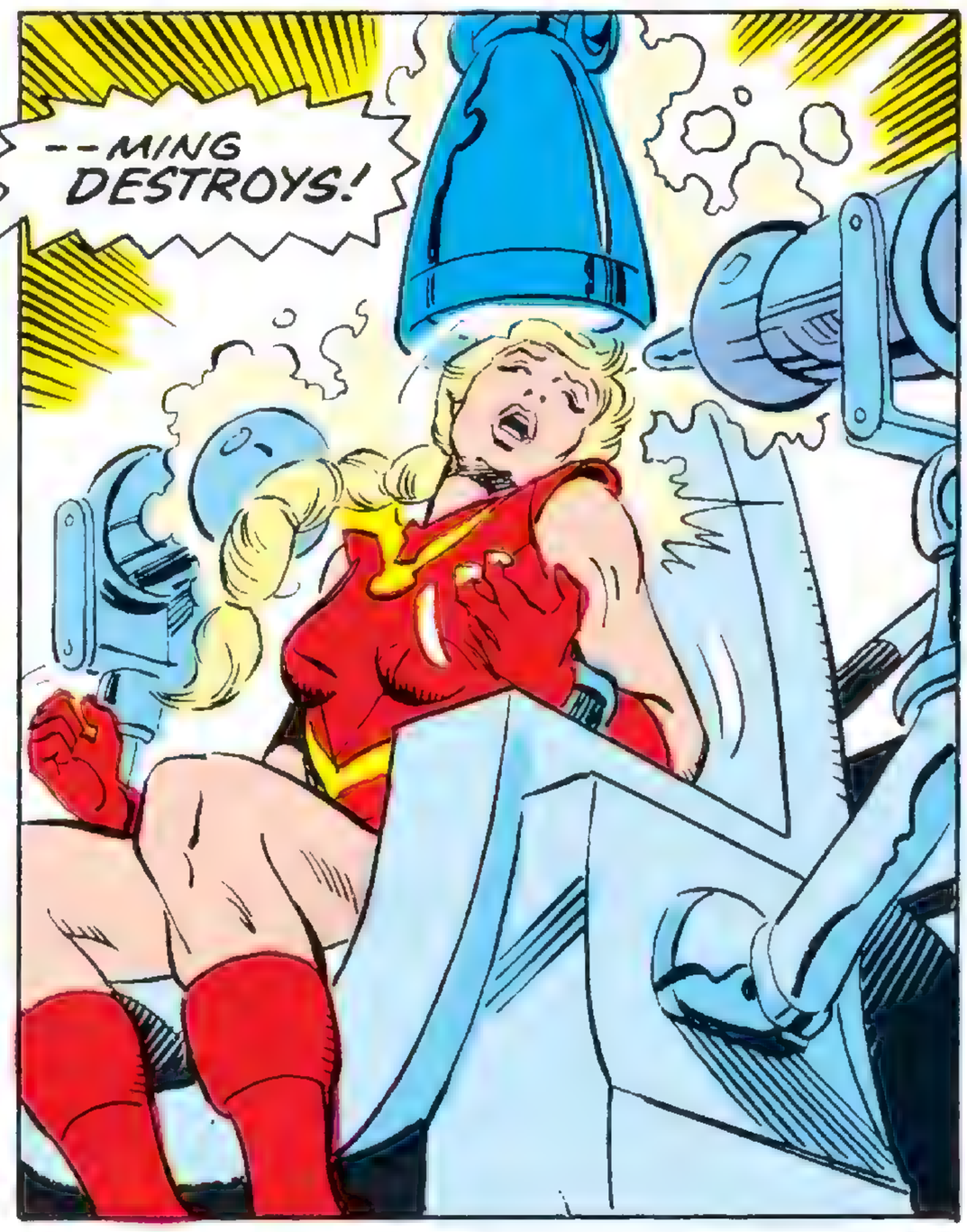
THIS IS THE SIGHT THAT STAGGERS RICK GORDON AS HE PEERS THROUGH THE HIDDEN GRATING...

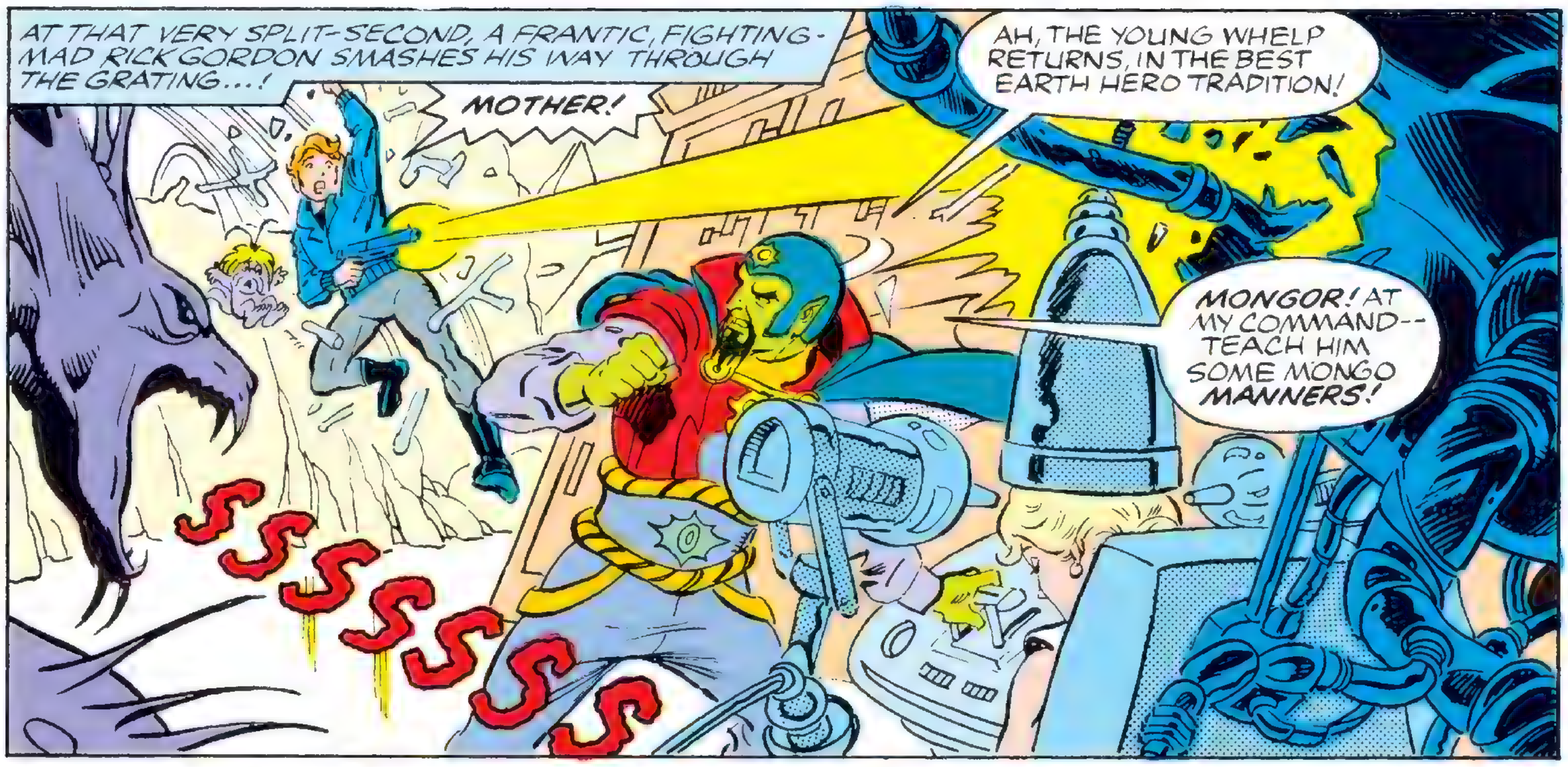
THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE, EARTH WOMAN! TELL ME WHERE YOUR SON IS HIDING, OR MY MENTAL PROBE DEVICE SHALL EXTRACT THE INFORMATION FROM YOU!

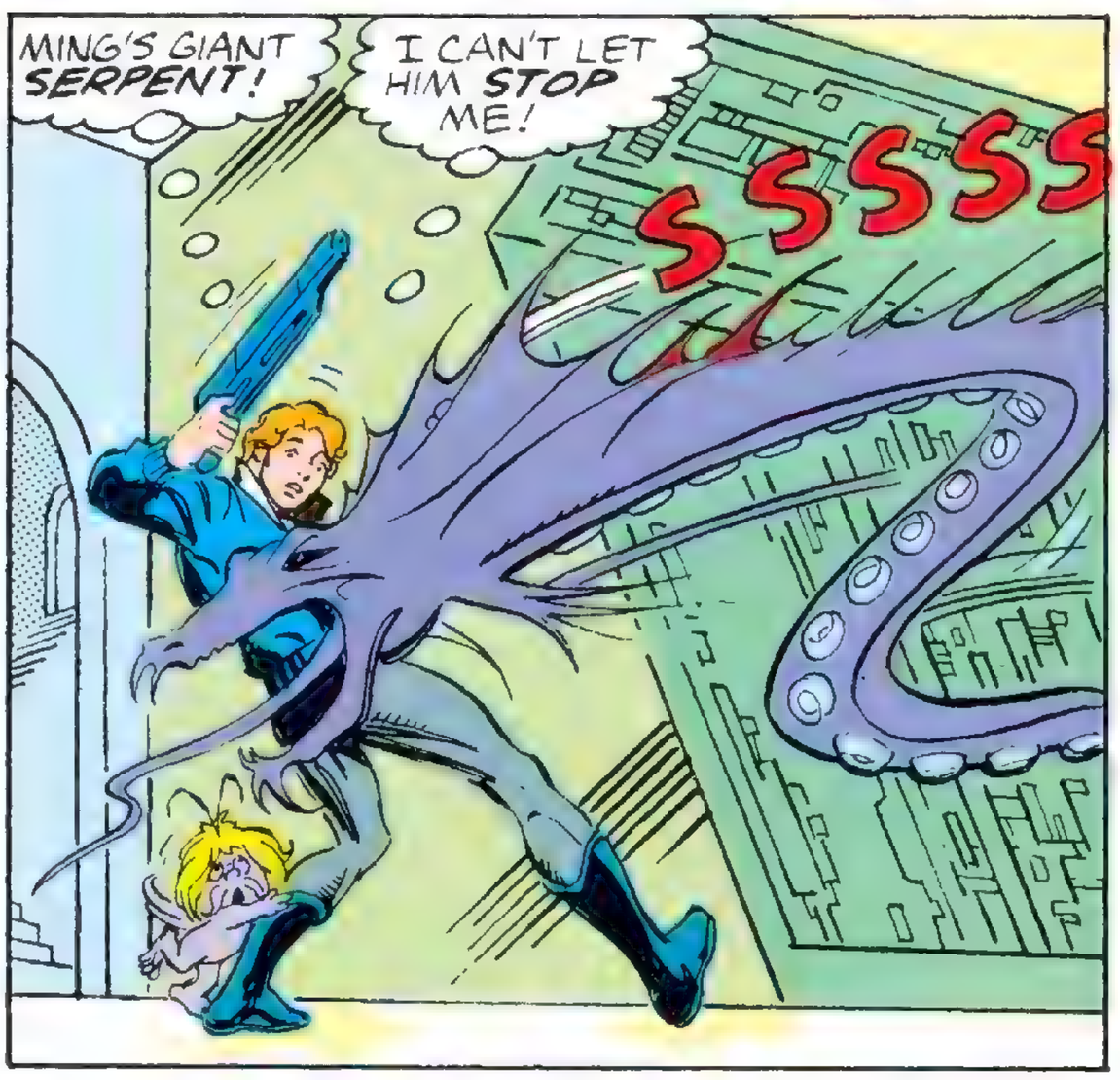
UNFORTUNATELY, WHEN IT TEARS HIS HIDING PLACE FROM YOUR BRAIN, IT WILL TEAR THE LIFE FROM YOUR BODY AS WELL!

I DON'T KNOW WHERE RICK IS, BUT EVEN IF I DID, I'D DIE BEFORE I'D REVEAL IT TO YOU!

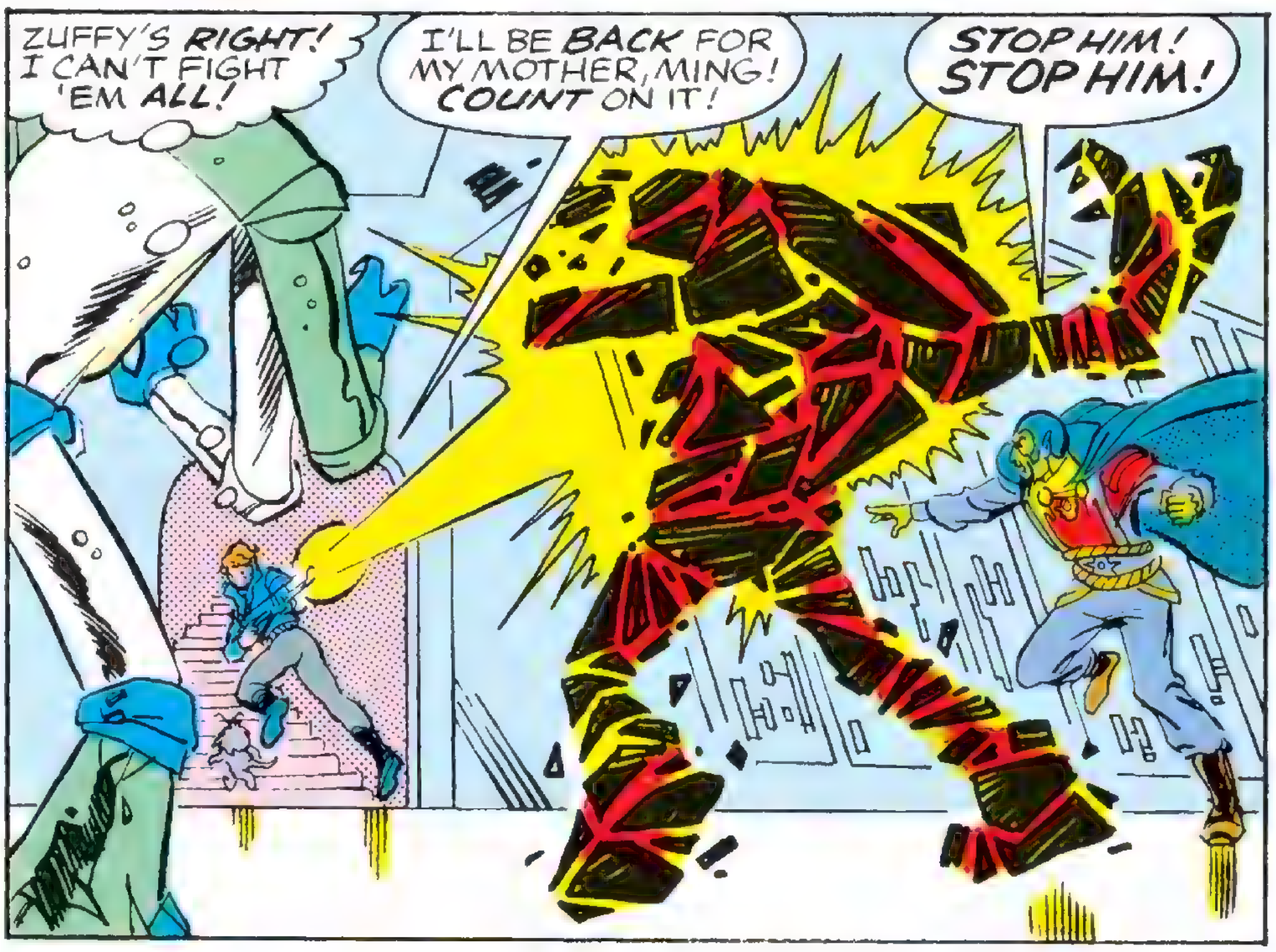





AT THAT VERY SPLIT-SECOND, A FRANTIC, FIGHTING-MAD RICK GORDON SMASHES HIS WAY THROUGH THE GRATING...!
MOTHER!
AH, THE YOUNG WHELP RETURNS, IN THE BEST EARTH HERO TRADITION!
MONGOR! AT MY COMMAND-- TEACH HIM SOME MONGO MANNERS!
SSSSSSS

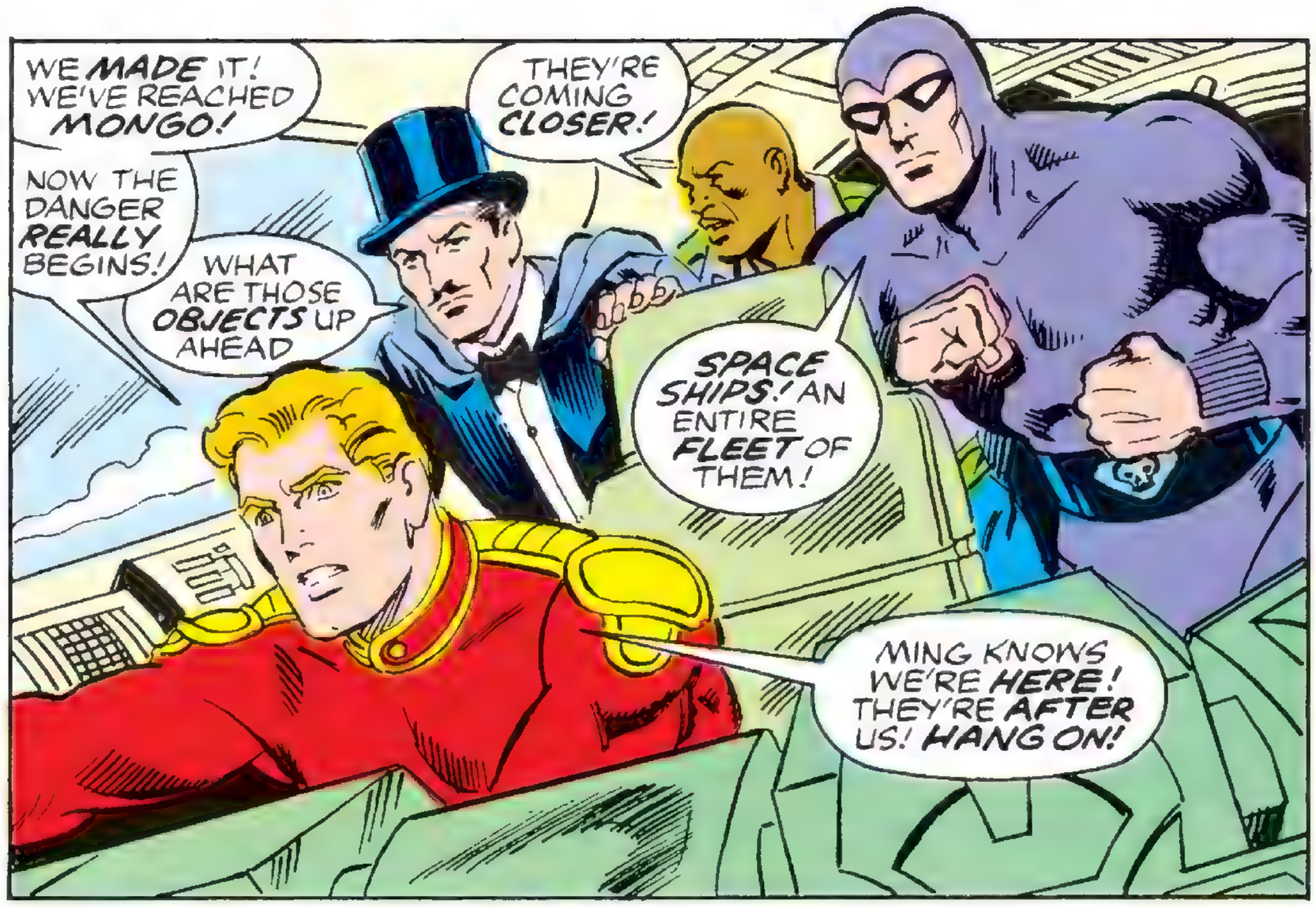

MING'S GIANT SERPENT!
I CAN'T LET HIM STOP ME!
SSSSSS

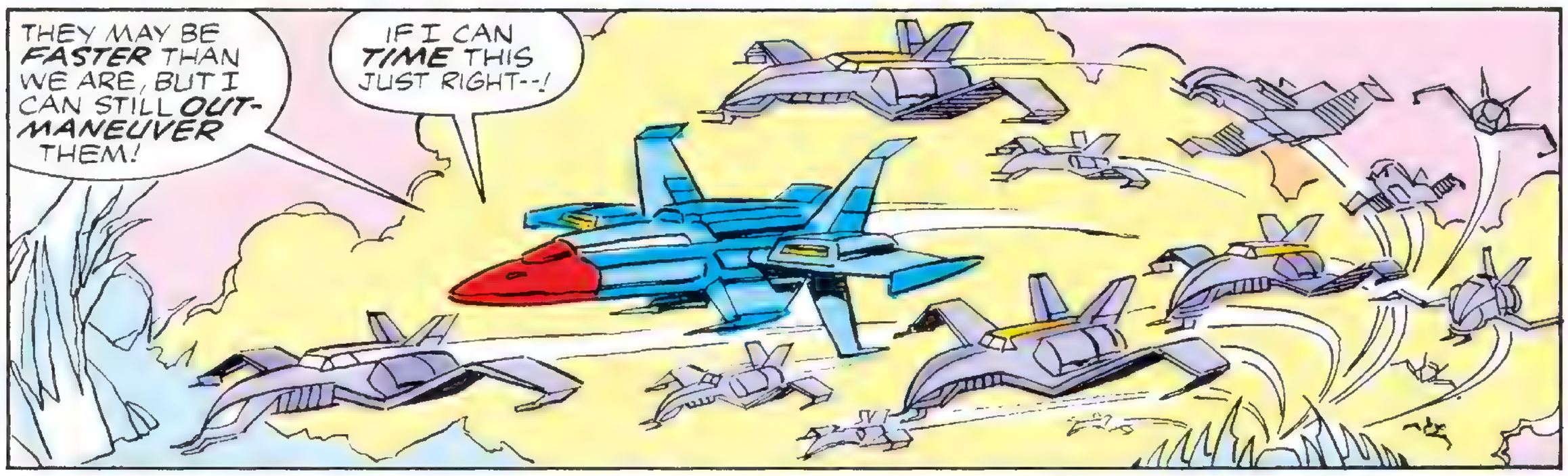
HE'S UNLEASHED HIS ROBOT WARRIORS! HE'S TAKING NO CHANCES!
ZUFFY! LET GO OF MY LEG!
ZISSST

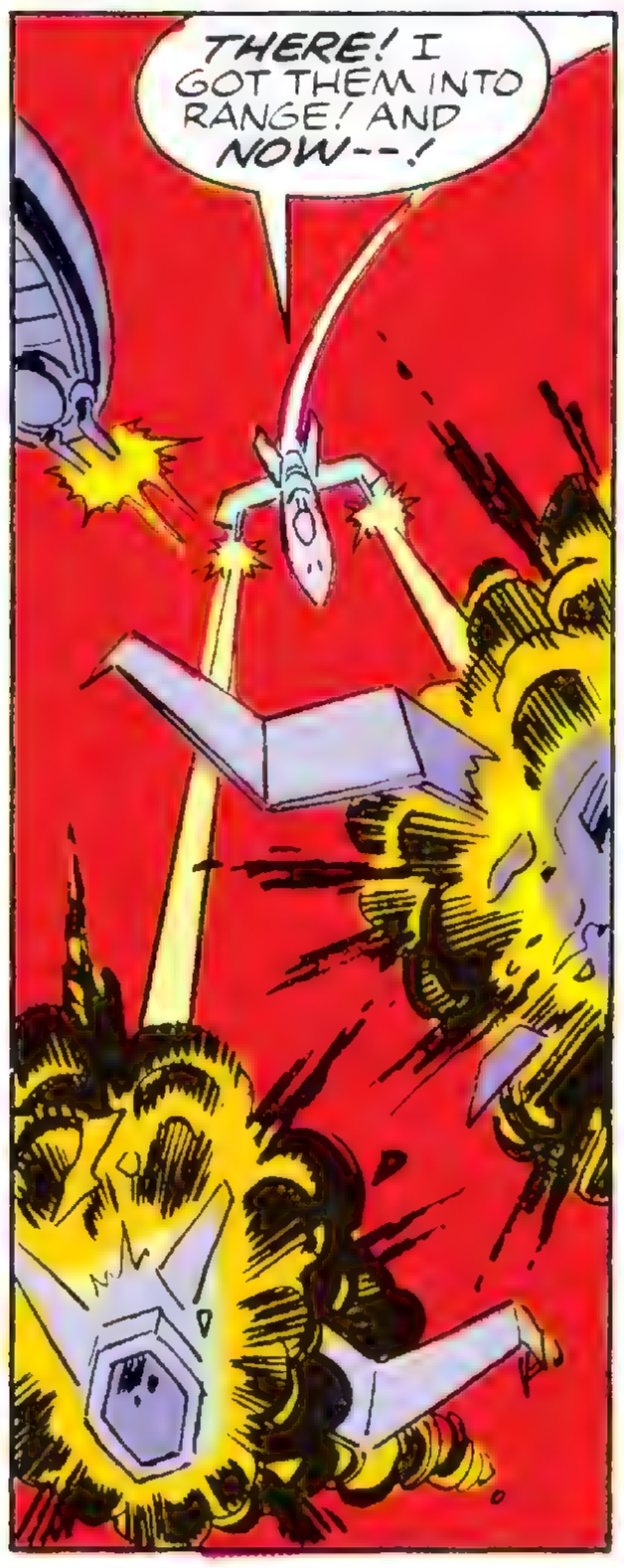

ZUFFY'S RIGHT! I CAN'T FIGHT 'EM ALL!
I'LL BE BACK FOR MY MOTHER, MING! COUNT ON IT!
STOP HIM! STOP HIM!

EEEEEEEE
THE INVASION ALARM!
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!

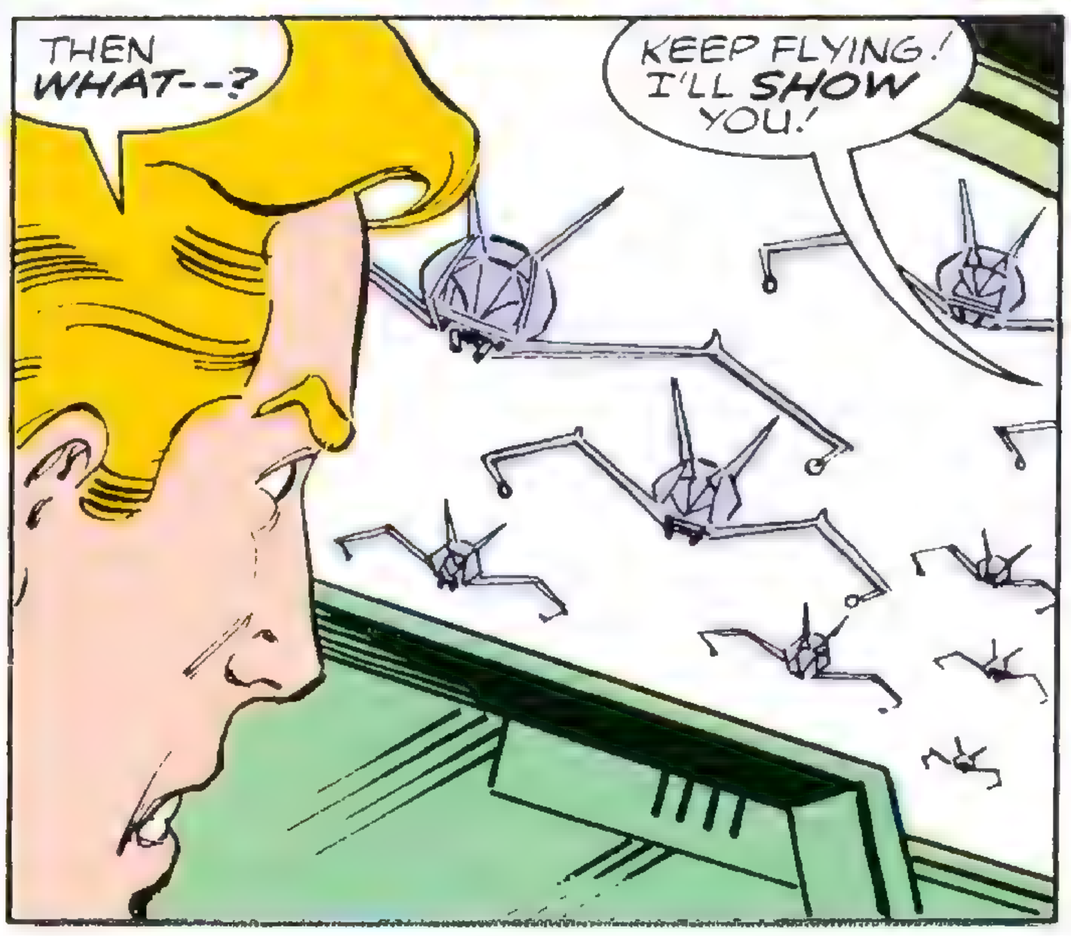
AN EARTHLING STARSHIP! IT CAN ONLY BE FLASH GORDON!
BY MY COMMAND-- DESTROY HIM!


WE MADE IT! WE'VE REACHED MONGO!
THEY'RE COMING CLOSER!
NOW THE DANGER REALLY BEGINS!
WHAT ARE THOSE OBJECTS UP AHEAD
SPACE SHIPS! AN ENTIRE FLEET OF THEM!
MING KNOWS WE'RE HERE! THEY'RE AFTER US! HANG ON!

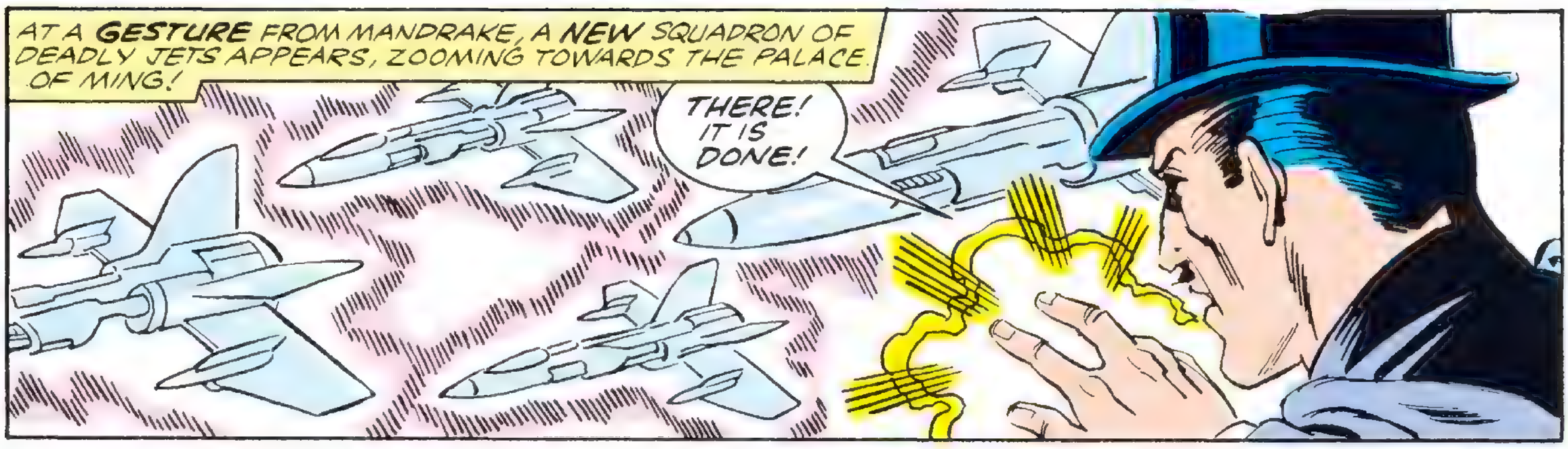

THEY MAY BE FASTER THAN WE ARE, BUT I CAN STILL OUT-MANEUVER THEM!
IF I CAN TIME THIS JUST RIGHT--!

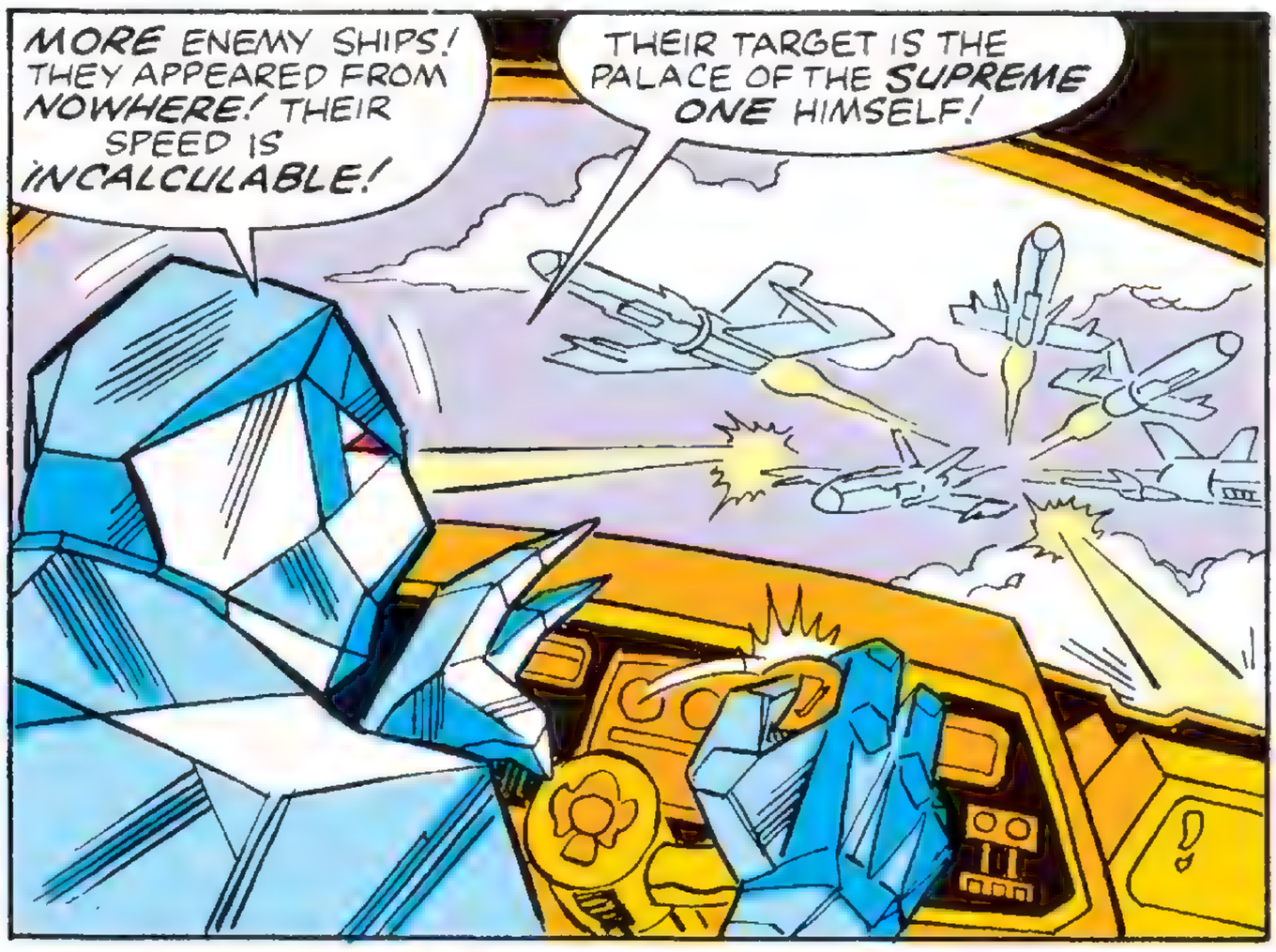

THERE! I GOT THEM INTO RANGE! AND NOW--!

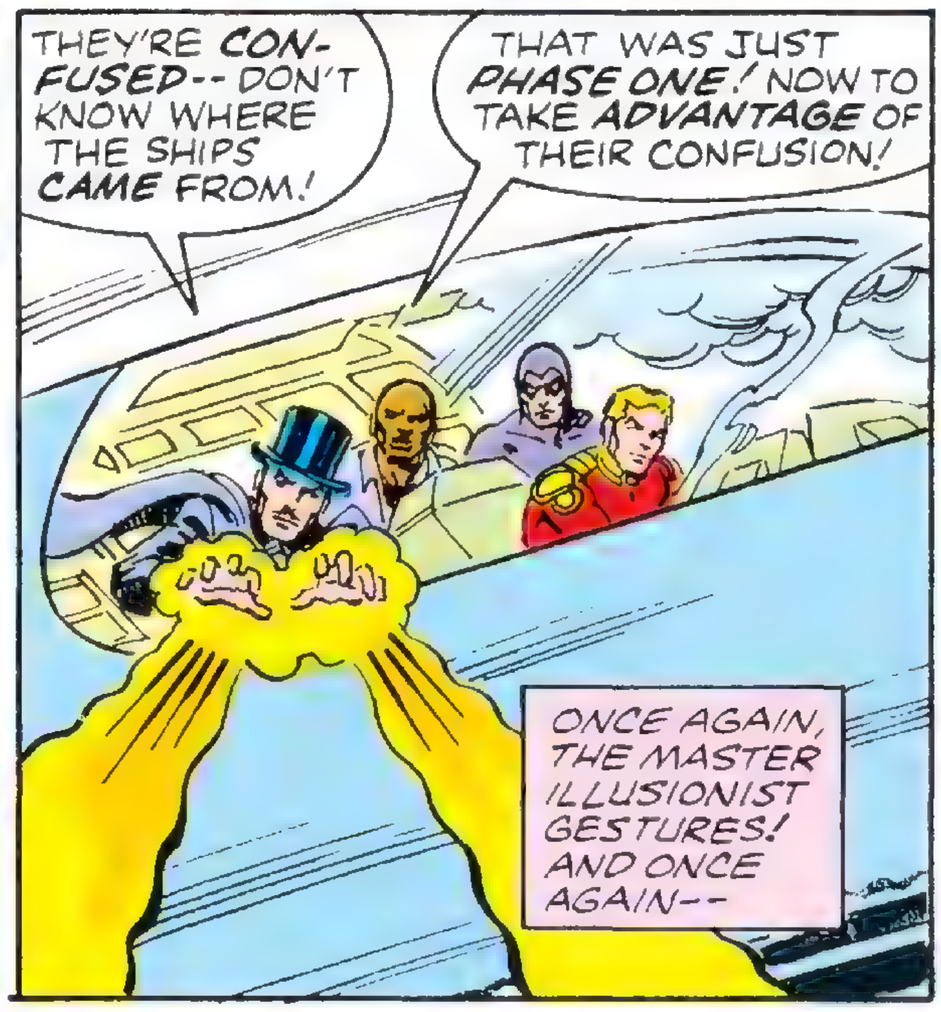
THERE ARE STILL TOO MANY OF THEM!
GOOD AS YOU ARE, YOU NEED SOME HELP!
BUT THERE'S NO EARTH SHIP WITHIN LIGHT YEARS OF HERE!
THAT'S NOT WHAT MANDRAKE MEANT!


THEN WHAT--?
KEEP FLYING! I'LL SHOW YOU!

A LITTLE ILLUSION MAY HELP TO EVEN THE ODDS!

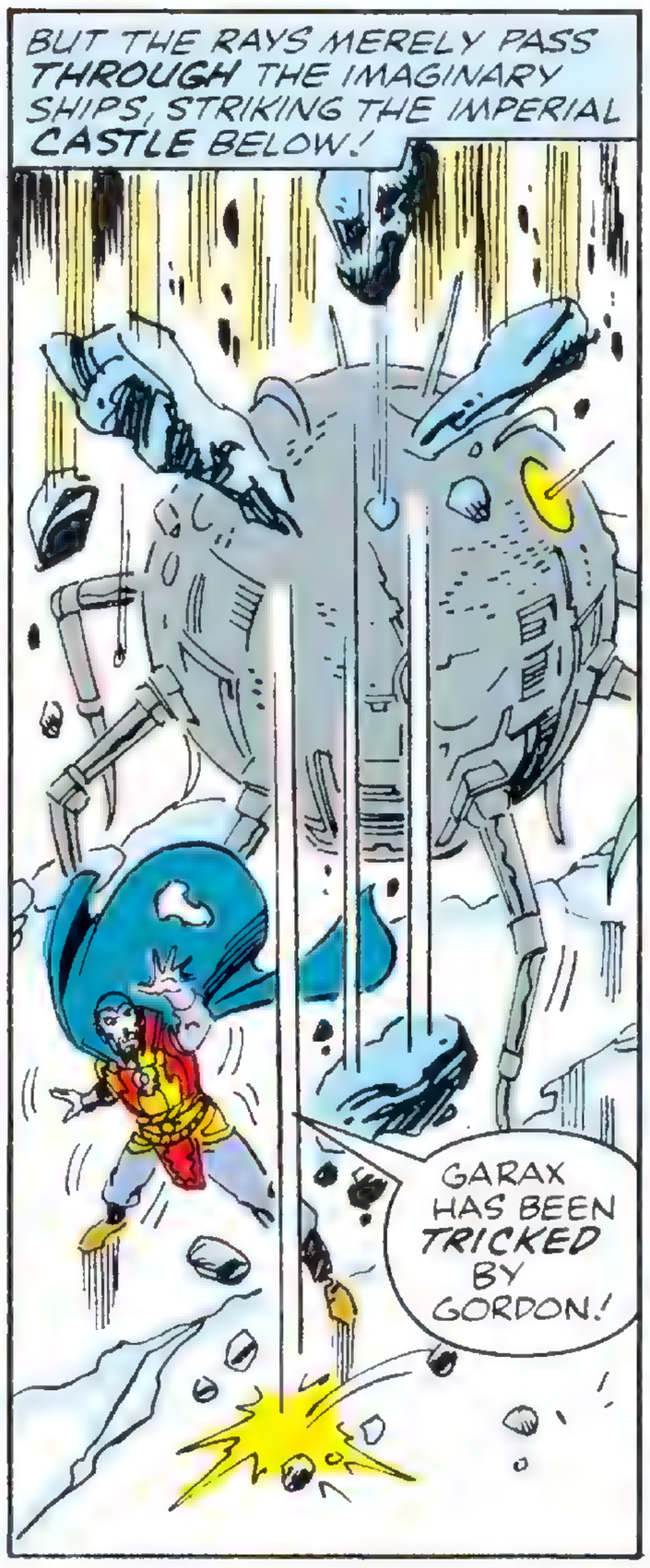

AT A GESTURE FROM MANDRAKE, A NEW SQUADRON OF DEADLY JETS APPEARS, ZOOMING TOWARDS THE PALACE OF MING!
THERE! IT IS DONE!

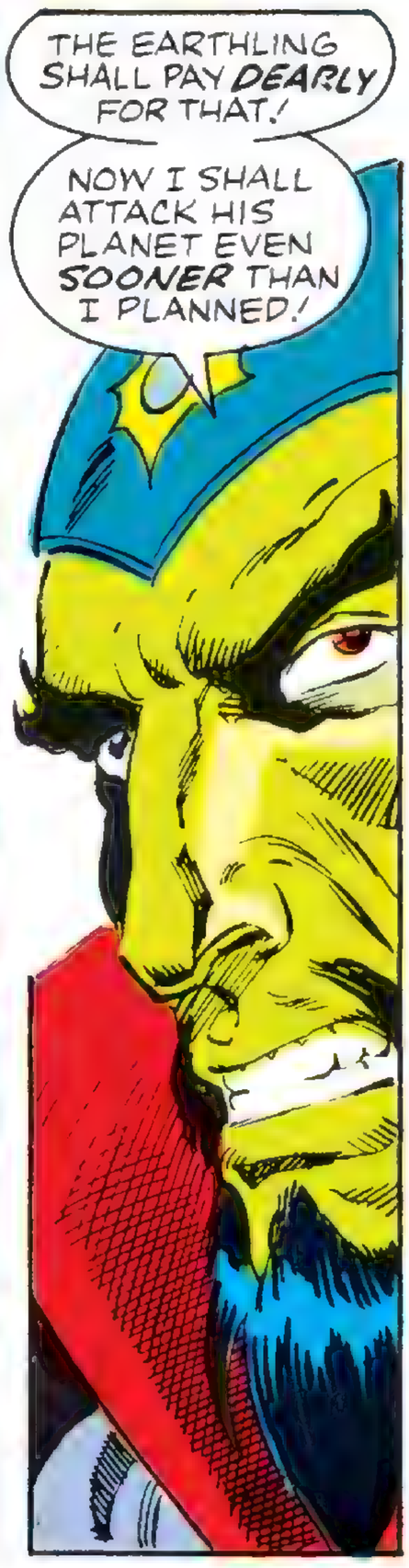

MORE ENEMY SHIPS! THEY APPEARED FROM NOWHERE! THEIR SPEED IS INCALCULABLE!
THEIR TARGET IS THE PALACE OF THE SUPREME ONE HIMSELF!

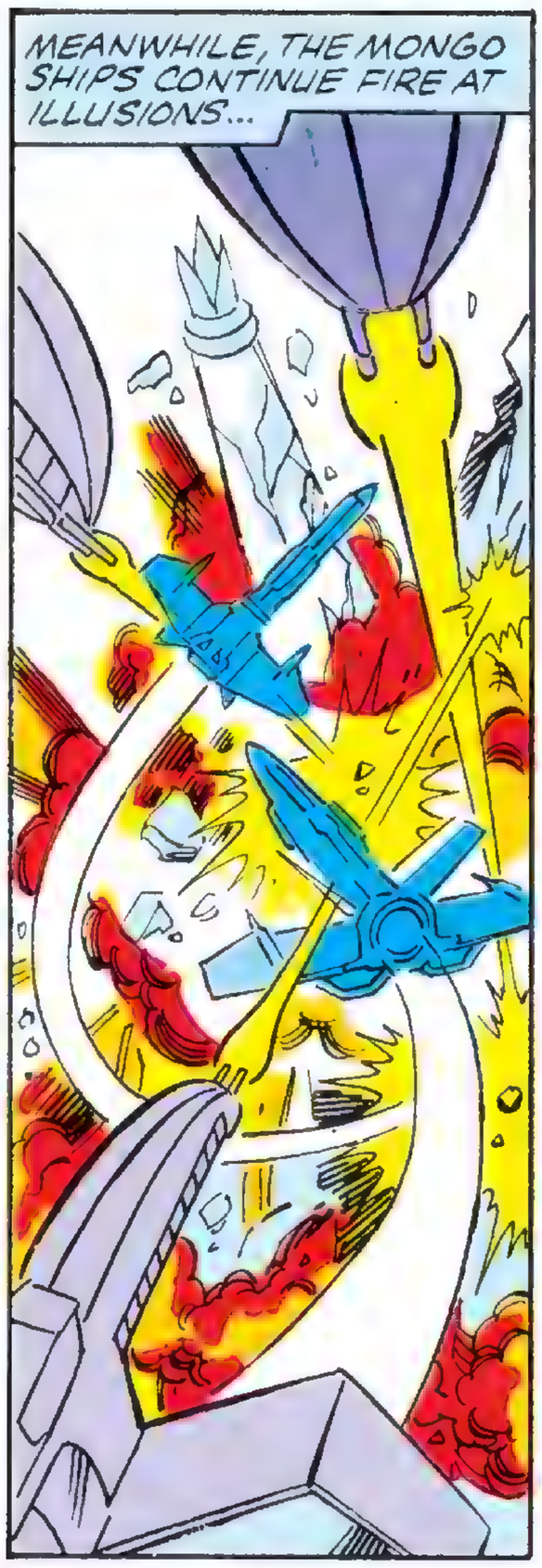

THEY'RE CONFUSED-- DON'T KNOW WHERE THE SHIPS CAME FROM!
THAT WAS JUST PHASE ONE! NOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR CONFUSION!
ONCE AGAIN, THE MASTER ILLUSIONIST GESTURES! AND ONCE AGAIN--

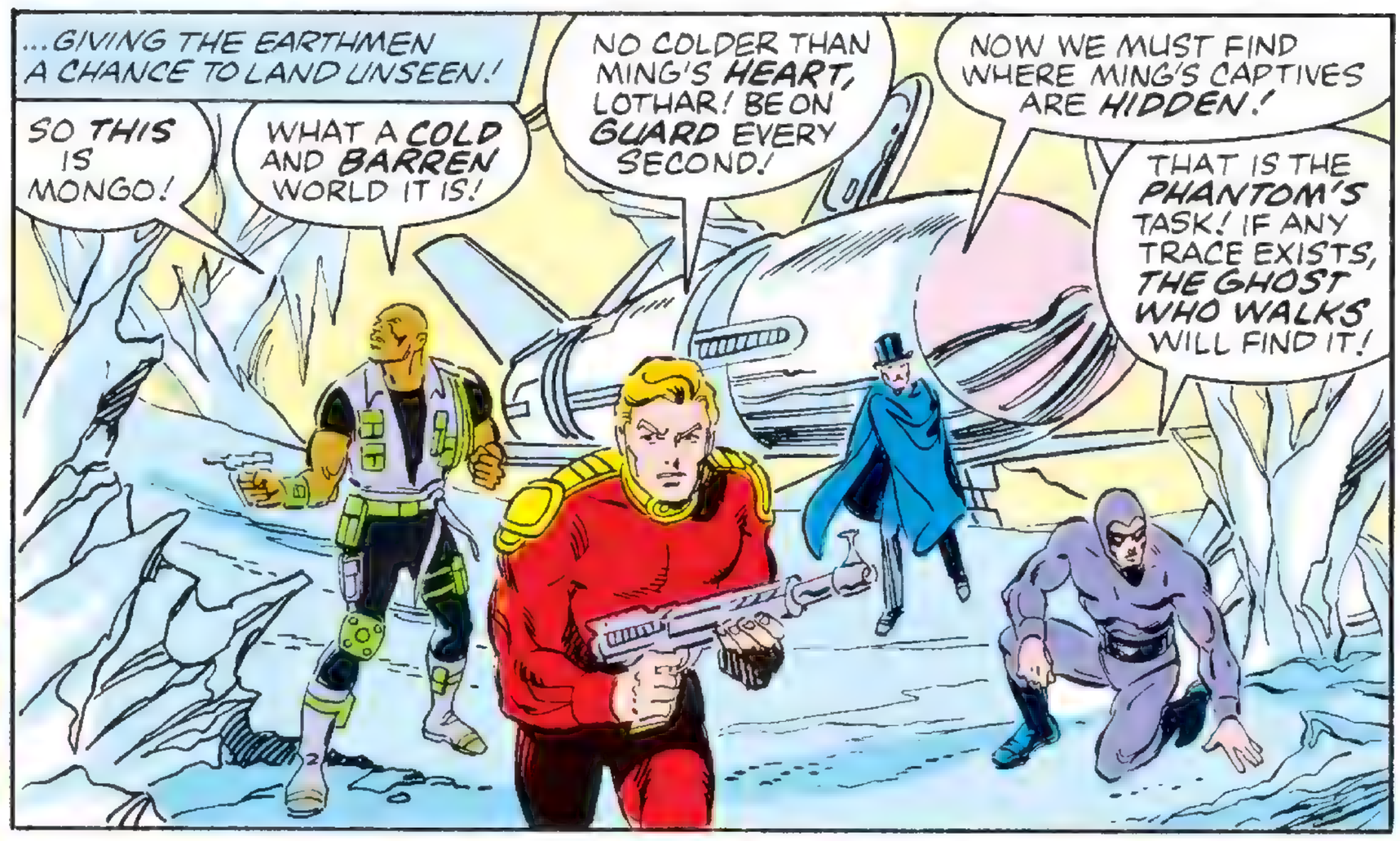
--THE SHIPS INCREASE IN NUMBER--APPEARING DIRECTLY ABOVE MING'S PALACE!
FORGET GORDON'S SHIP! ATTACK THE NEW-COMERS!

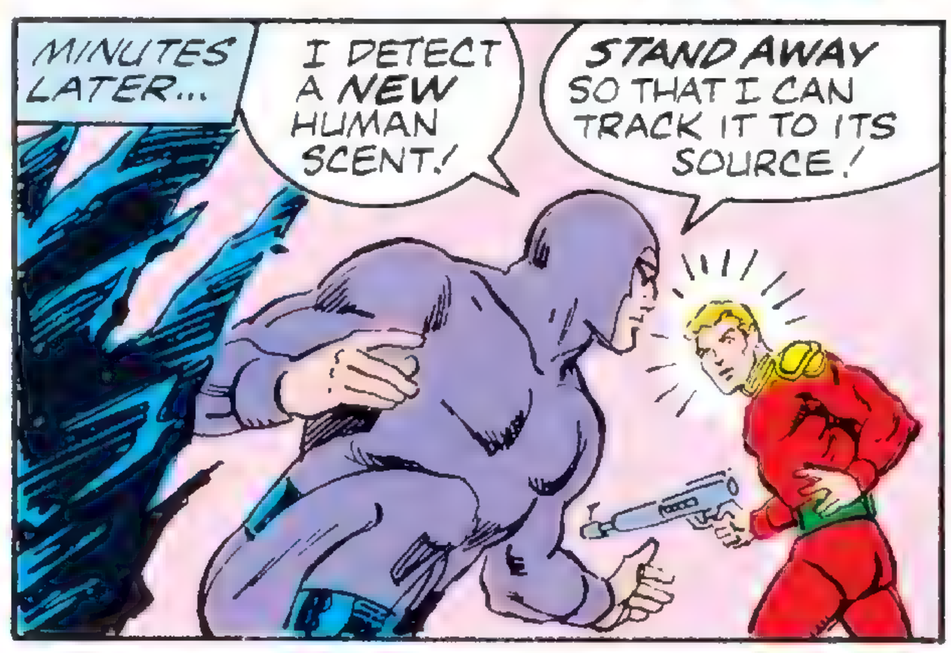
INSTANTLY, MING'S SHIPS TURN THEIR DEADLY LASER RAYS UPON THE INVADING FLEET!

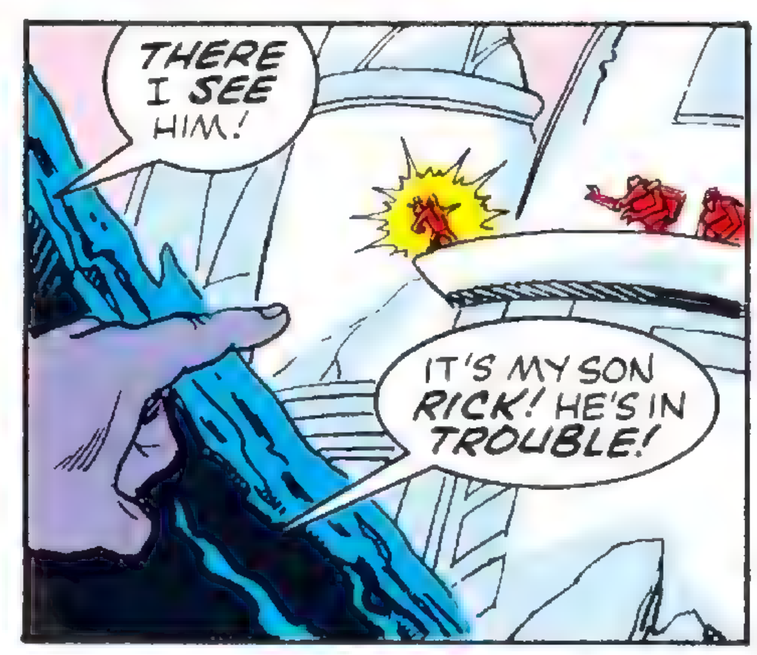

BUT THE RAYS MERELY PASS THROUGH THE IMAGINARY SHIPS, STRIKING THE IMPERIAL CASTLE BELOW!
GARAX HAS BEEN TRICKED BY GORDON!


THE EARTHLING SHALL PAY DEARLY FOR THAT!
NOW I SHALL ATTACK HIS PLANET EVEN SOONER THAN I PLANNED!


MEANWHILE, THE MONGO SHIPS CONTINUE FIRE AT ILLUSIONS...

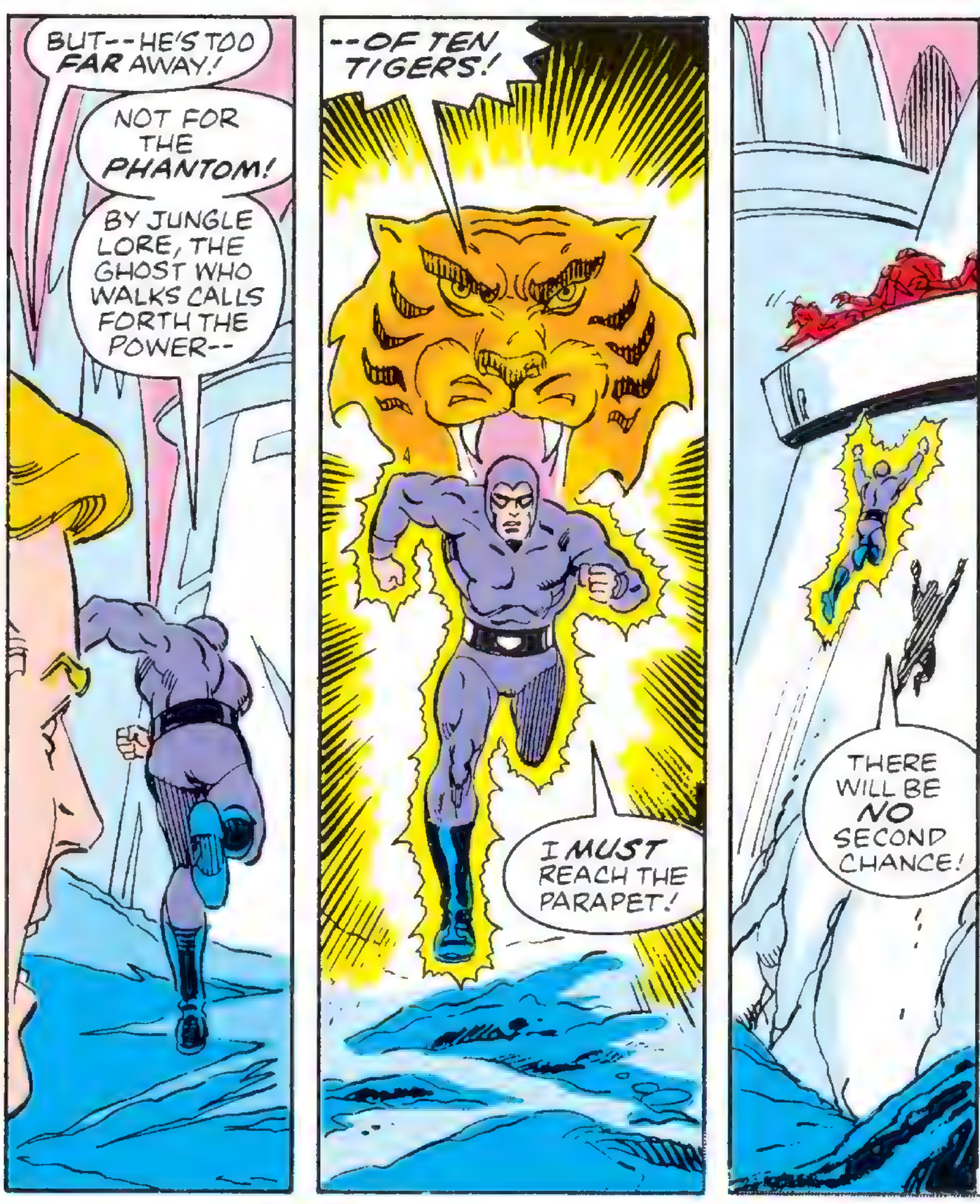

...GIVING THE EARTHMEN A CHANCE TO LAND UNSEEN!
SO THIS IS MONGO!
WHAT A COLD AND BARREN WORLD IT IS!
NO COLDER THAN MING'S HEART, LOTHAR! BE ON GUARD EVERY SECOND!
NOW WE MUST FIND WHERE MING'S CAPTIVES ARE HIDDEN!
THAT IS THE PHANTOM'S TASK! IF ANY TRACE EXISTS, THE GHOST WHO WALKS WILL FIND IT!


MINUTES LATER...
I DETECT A NEW HUMAN SCENT!
STAND AWAY SO THAT I CAN TRACK IT TO ITS SOURCE!


THERE I SEE HIM!
IT'S MY SON RICK! HE'S IN TROUBLE!


BUT--HE'S TOO FAR AWAY!
NOT FOR THE PHANTOM!
BY JUNGLE LORE, THE GHOST WHO WALKS CALLS FORTH THE POWER--


--OF TEN TIGERS!
I MUST REACH THE PARAPET!

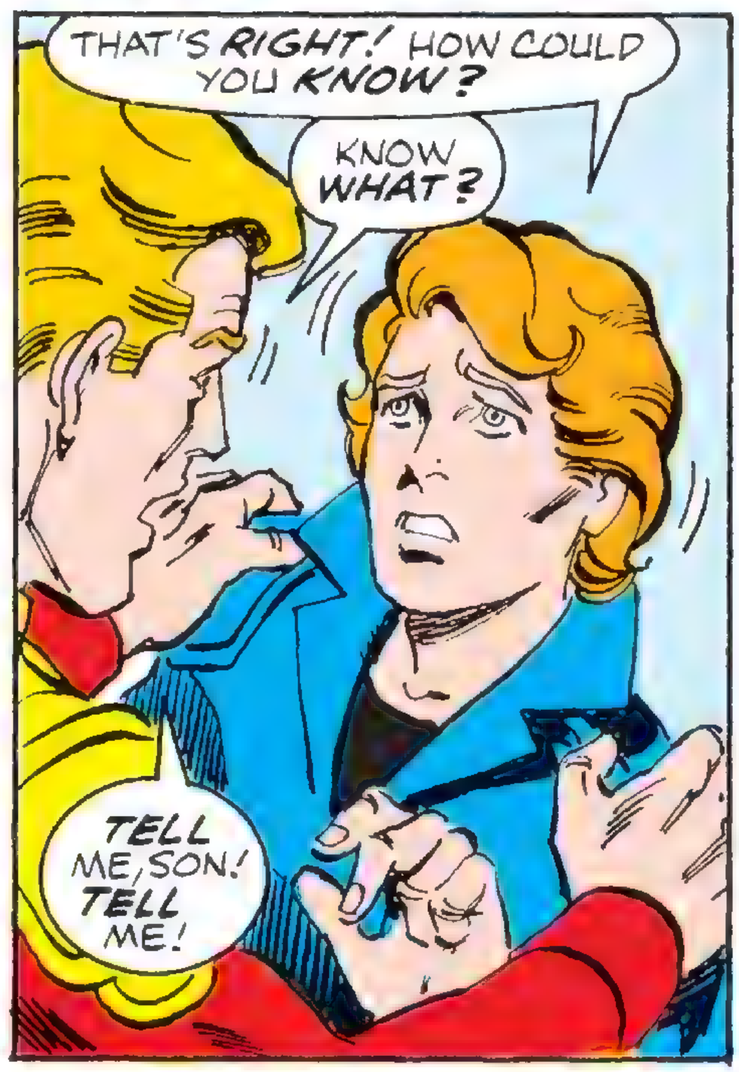

THERE WILL BE NO SECOND CHANCE!

ZKLANG
MADE IT!
WITH SUPERHUMAN IMPACT, THE PHANTOM'S LUNGE DISABLES THE TWO ICE ROBOTS!

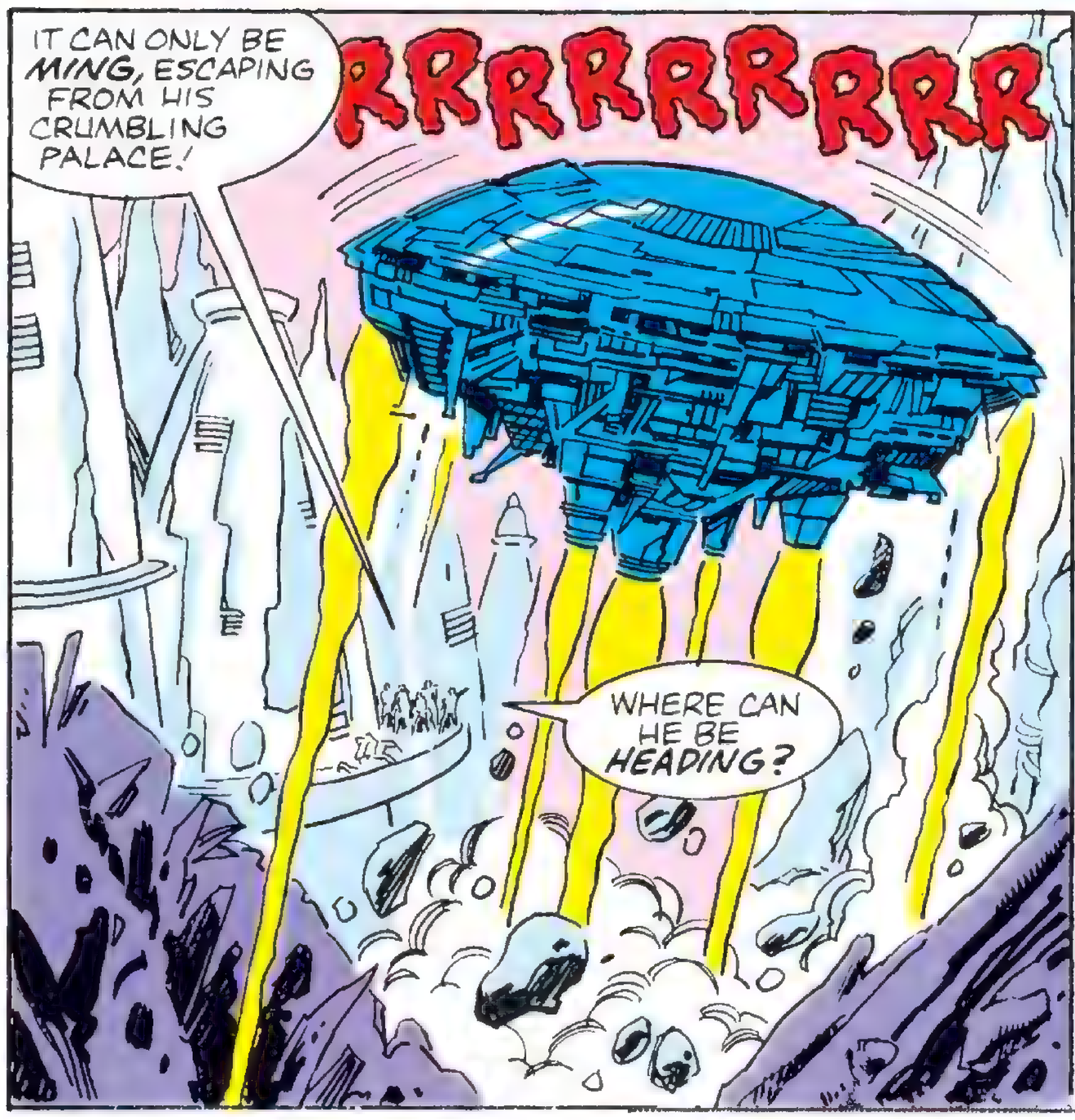

YOU SAVED ME! BUT WHO--?
WAIT! I'VE SEEN YOUR PICTURE! YOU'RE--
A FRIEND!

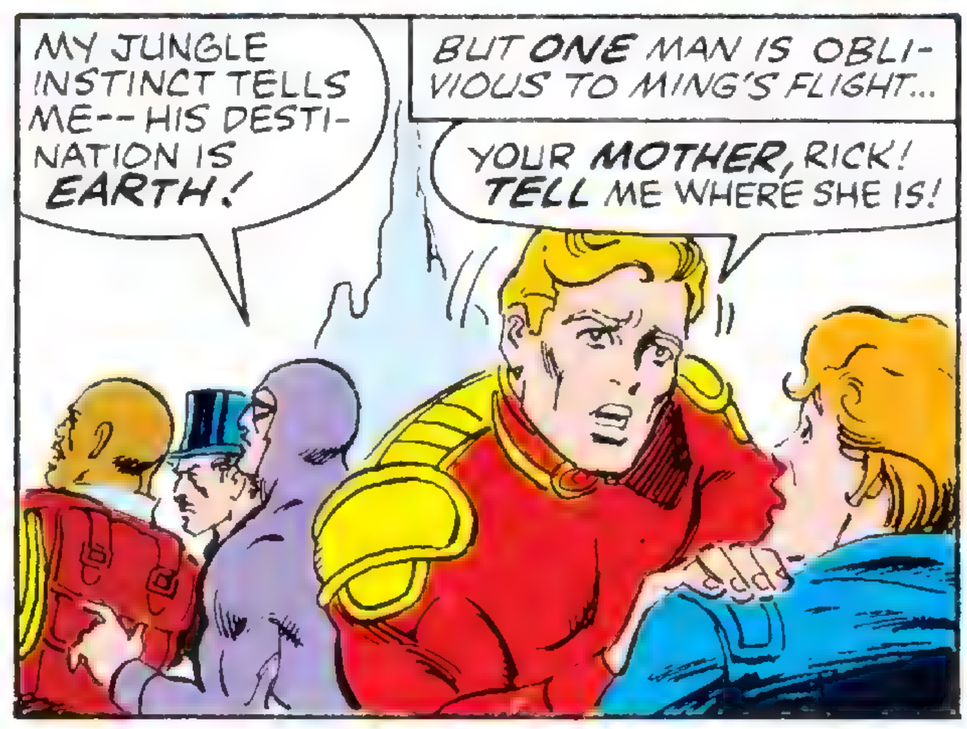
DAD! I-I THOUGHT I WAS GONNA BE HISTORY!
NO WAY, SON! WE'RE NOT IN THIS ALONE ANYMORE!
AH, MANDRAKE, TOO BAD YOU COULD NOT WILL YOURSELF UP HERE!
I NEVER WASTE MY POWERS, OLD FRIEND!

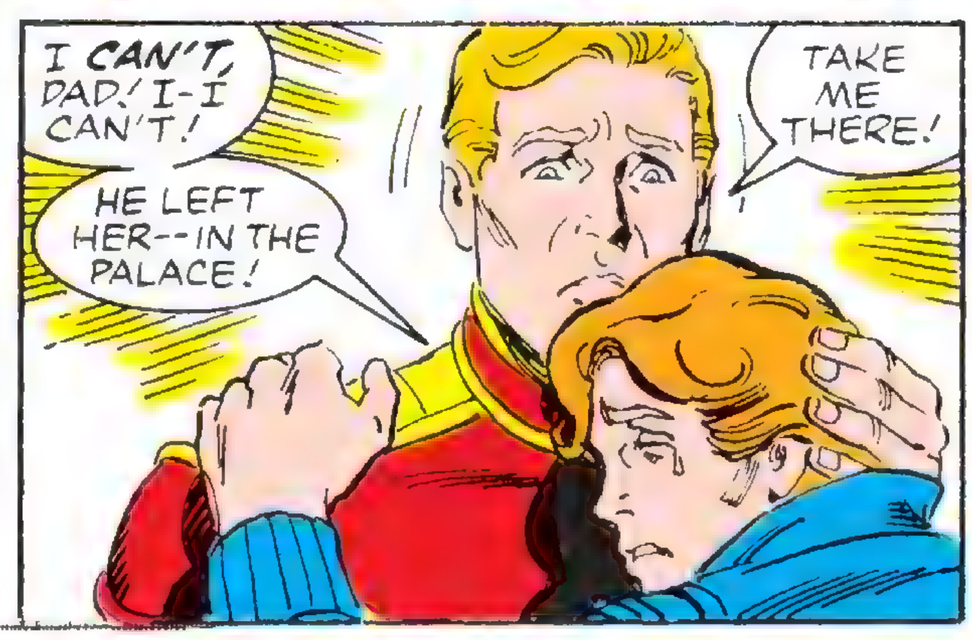
SPEAKING OF POWERS, PHANTOM, YOUR TEN-TIGER LEAP WAS TRULY AMAZING!
PERHAPS WE MIGHT SOMEDAY SHARE OUR SECRETS!
MINE CANNOT BE SHARED, MANDRAKE! THEY ARE MORE THAN SECRETS!
THEY ARE THE PHANTOM'S HERITAGE!
WHAT OF YOUR MOTHER, RICK? WHERE IS SHE?
MOTHER?


THAT'S RIGHT! HOW COULD YOU KNOW?
KNOW WHAT?
TELL ME, SON! TELL ME!

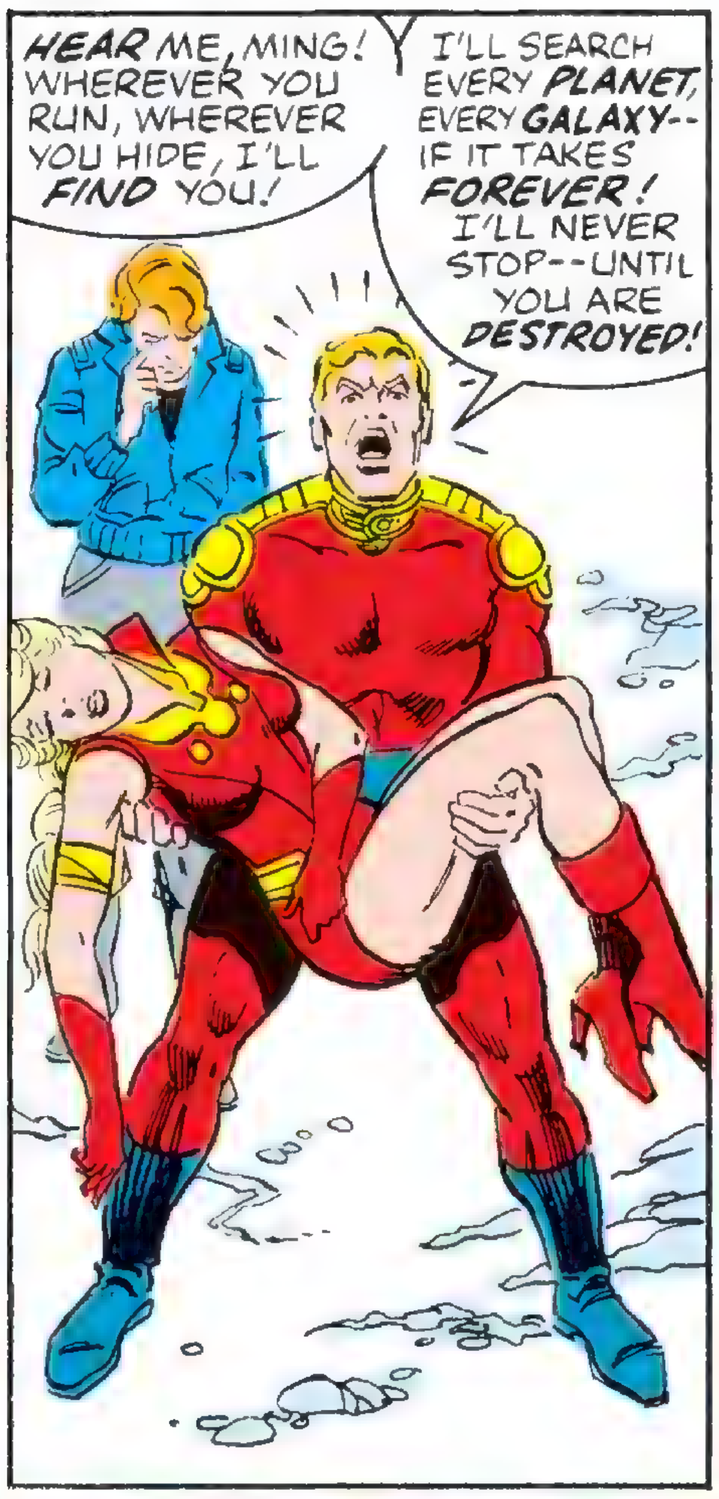
BUT BEFORE THE HEARTSICK BOY CAN ANSWER...
RRRRRRRRR
LISTEN! THE SOUND OF MIGHTY ENGINES!


IT CAN ONLY BE MING, ESCAPING FROM HIS CRUMBLING PALACE!
RRRRRRRRRRR
WHERE CAN HE BE HEADING?


MY JUNGLE INSTINCT TELLS ME-- HIS DESTINATION IS EARTH!
BUT ONE MAN IS OBLIVIOUS TO MING'S FLIGHT...
YOUR MOTHER, RICK! TELL ME WHERE SHE IS!


I CAN'T, DAD! I-I CAN'T!
HE LEFT HER--IN THE PALACE!
TAKE ME THERE!

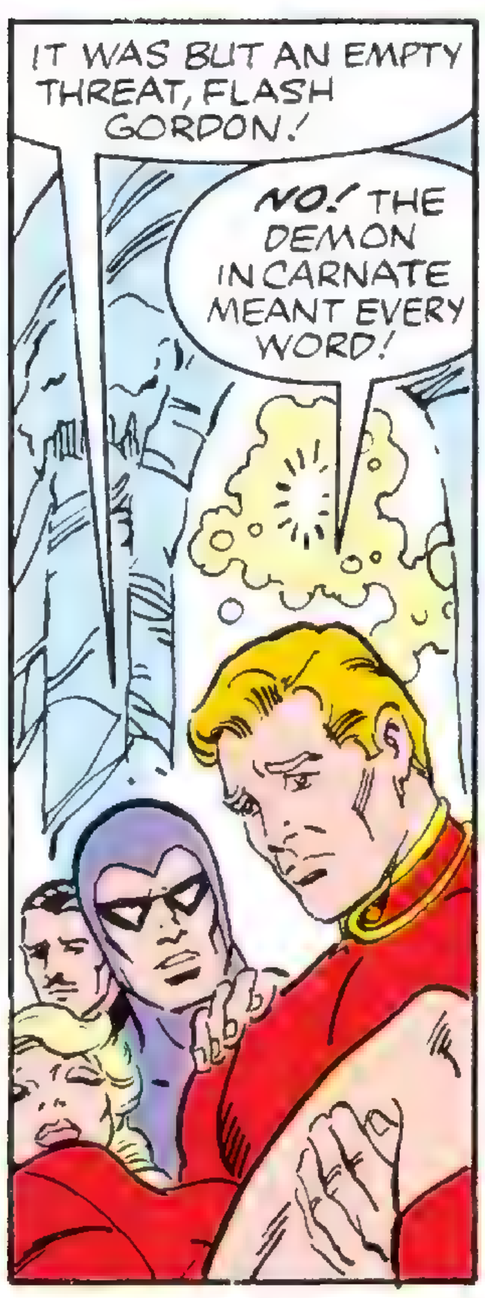
MINUTES LATER, A STUNNED AND GRIEVING FLASH GORDON FINDS THE LIFE-LESS FORM OF HIS BELOVED WIFE...
I TRIED TO SAVE HER, DAD! I--I TRIED MY BEST!
I KNOW IT, SON! I KNOW YOU DID!
WITH ALL OUR POWERS-- WITH ALL OUR SKILLS--
EVEN SUCH AS WE MUST SOMETIMES FAIL!
WHAT MANNER OF FIEND IS MING--TO SLAY A WIFE AND MOTHER?

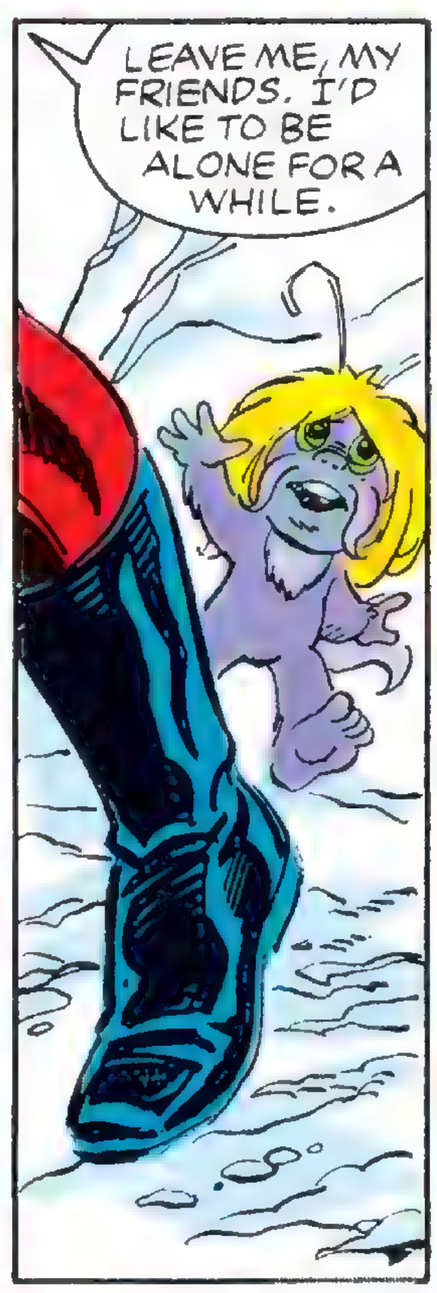

HEAR ME, MING! WHEREVER YOU RUN, WHEREVER YOU HIDE, I'LL FIND YOU!
I'LL SEARCH EVERY PLANET, EVERY GALAXY--IF IT TAKES FOREVER! I'LL NEVER STOP--UNTIL YOU ARE DESTROYED!

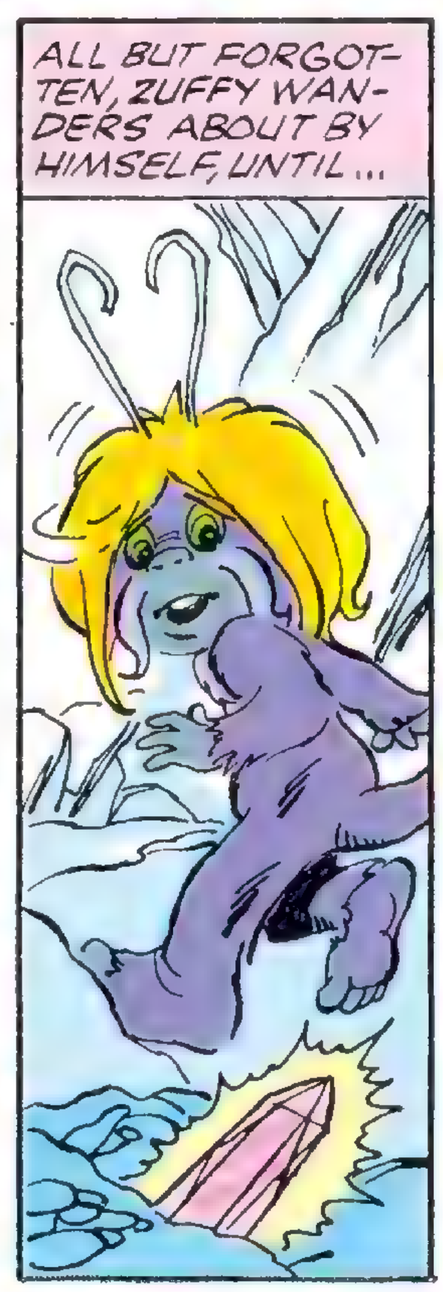
THE EMPTY MOUTHINGS OF A HAPLESS EARTHLING MEAN NAUGHT TO THE MONARCH OF MONGO!
MING! HE'S PROJECTING A HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE OF HIMSELF!

TODAY YOU HAVE ONLY FELT A RUDIMENTARY SAMPLE OF MY MIGHT!
TODAY, FLASH GORDON, I HAVE BUT ROBBED YOU OF YOUR WIFE!

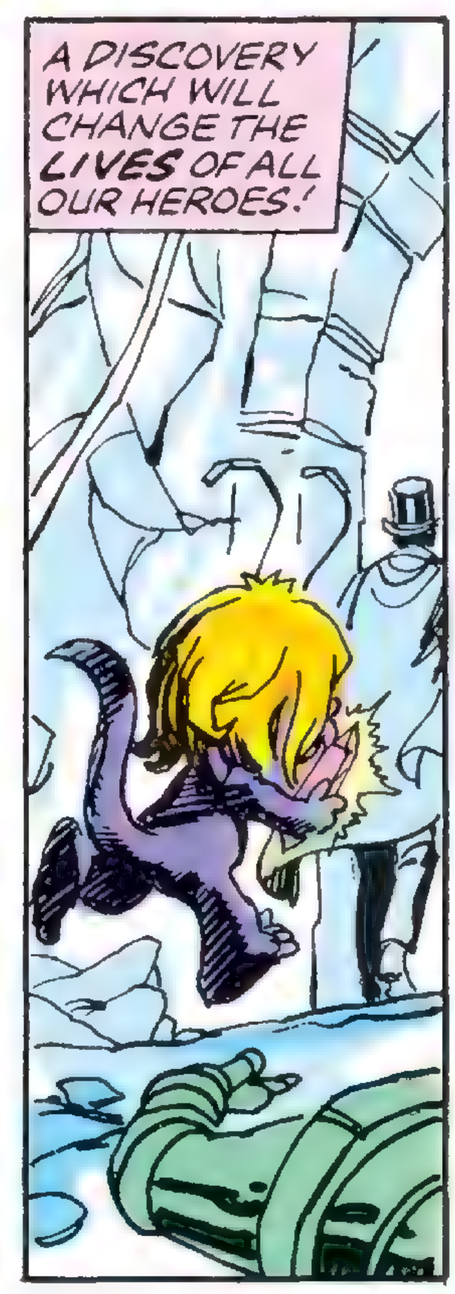
TOMORROW, MING SHALL ROB YOU OF--YOUR WORLD!

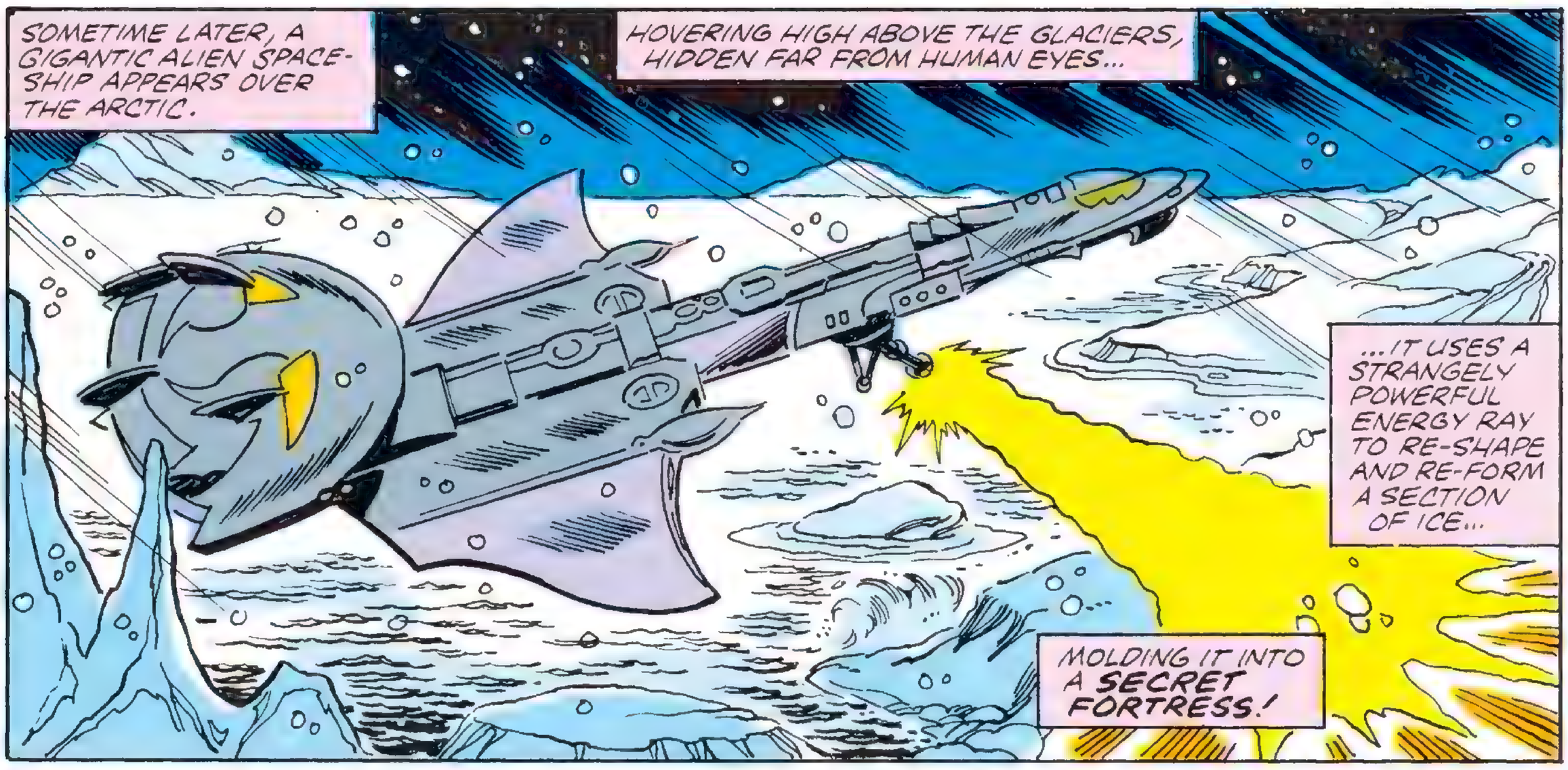

IT WAS BUT AN EMPTY THREAT, FLASH GORDON!
NO! THE DEMON INCARNATE MEANT EVERY WORD!


LEAVE ME, MY FRIENDS. I'D LIKE TO BE ALONE FOR A WHILE.


ALL BUT FORGOTTEN, ZUFFY WANDERS ABOUT BY HIMSELF, UNTIL...

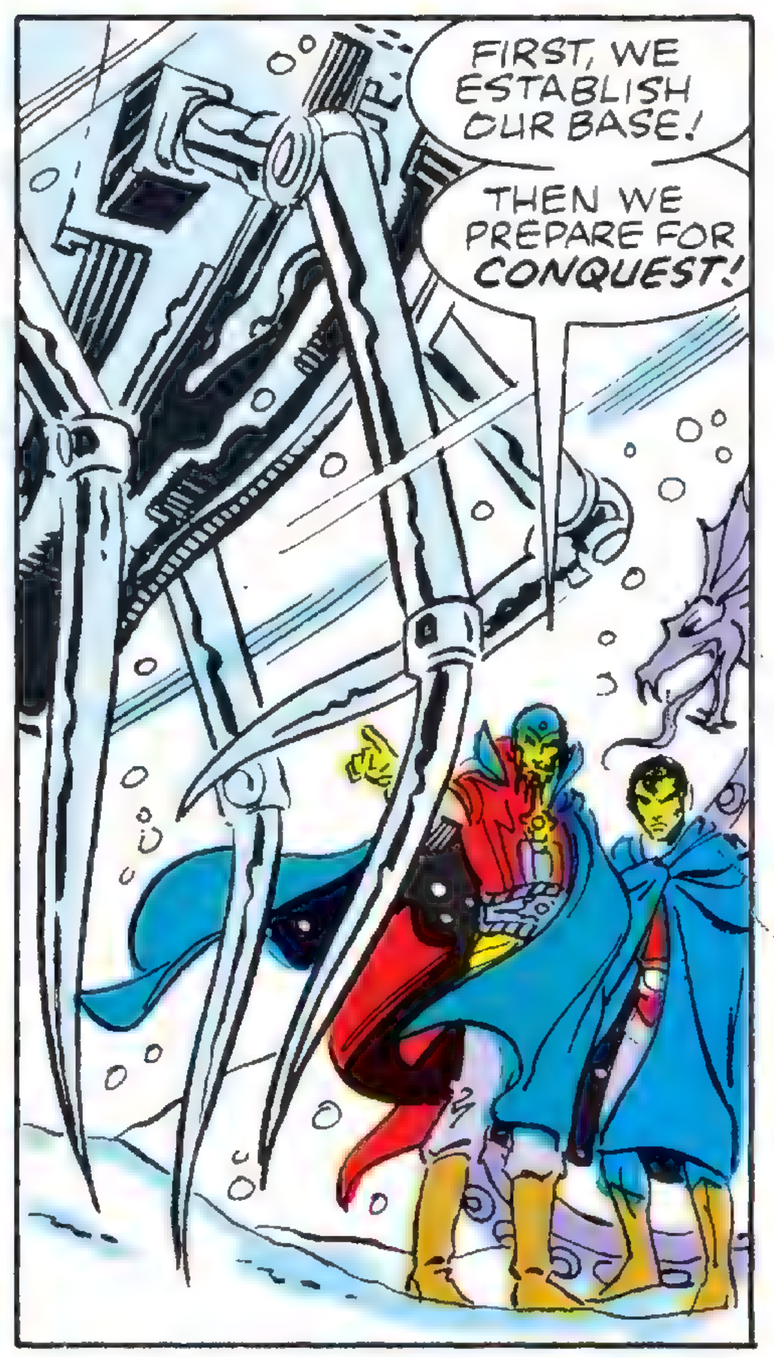
HE FINDS A STRANGELY GLEAMING CRYSTAL SHARD...


A DISCOVERY WHICH WILL CHANGE THE LIVES OF ALL OUR HEROES!

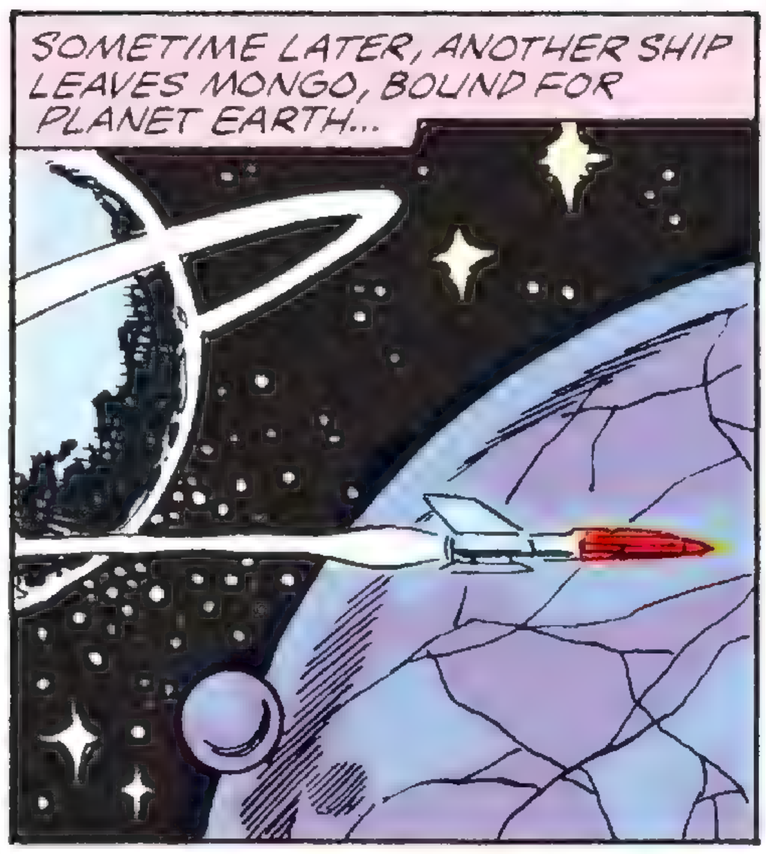

SOMETIME LATER, A GIGANTIC ALIEN SPACE-SHIP APPEARS OVER THE ARCTIC.
HOVERING HIGH ABOVE THE GLACIERS, HIDDEN FAR FROM HUMAN EYES...
...IT USES A STRANGELY POWERFUL ENERGY RAY TO RE-SHAPE AND RE-FORM A SECTION OF ICE...
MOLDING IT INTO A SECRET FORTRESS!

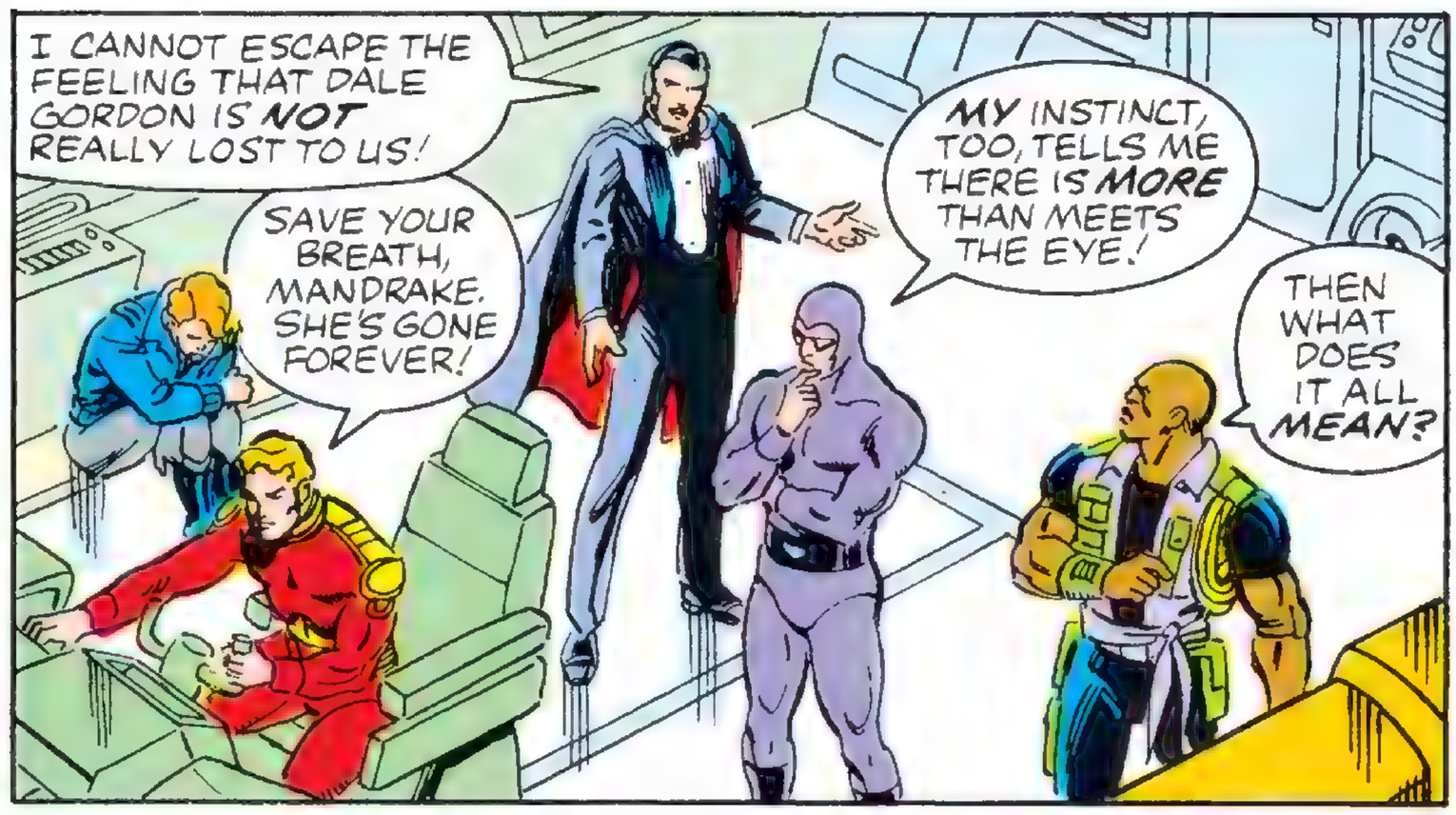
FINALLY, FOUR EVIL FIGURES EMERGE FROM THE NOW-DESCENDED SHIP...
HENCEFORTH, THIS WILL BE OUR BASE ON THE ACCURSED PLANET EARTH!
IT IS A DREARY WORLD, NOT WORTHY OF CONQUEST!

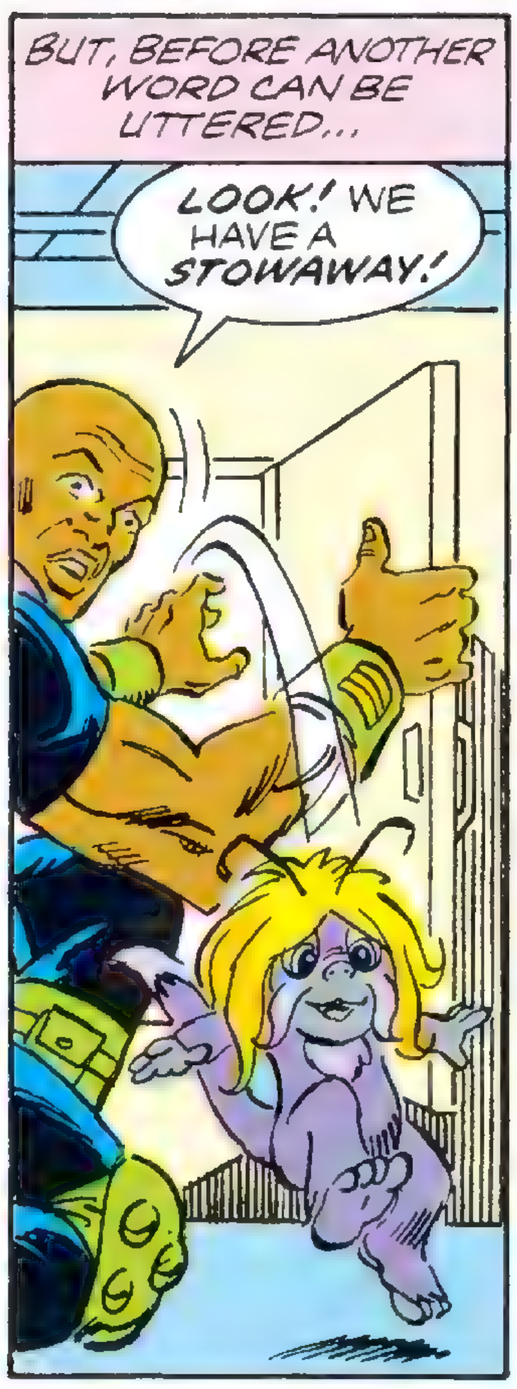
YOU ARE WRONG, KRO-TAN! EARTH IS A REPOSITORY OF TREASURES FOR US TO PLUNDER!
I HAVE CHOSEN THIS BLEAK AREA BECAUSE NONE WILL FIND US HERE!
WHAT DO WE DO NEXT, FATHER?

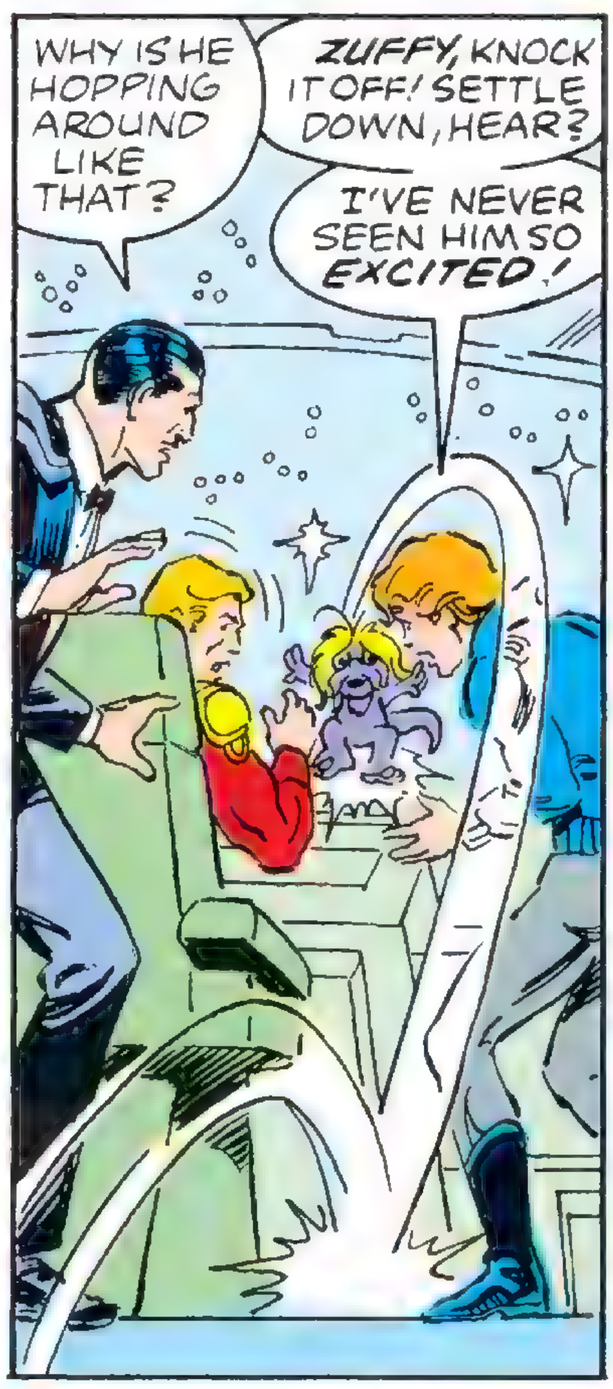

FIRST, WE ESTABLISH OUR BASE!
THEN WE PREPARE FOR CONQUEST!

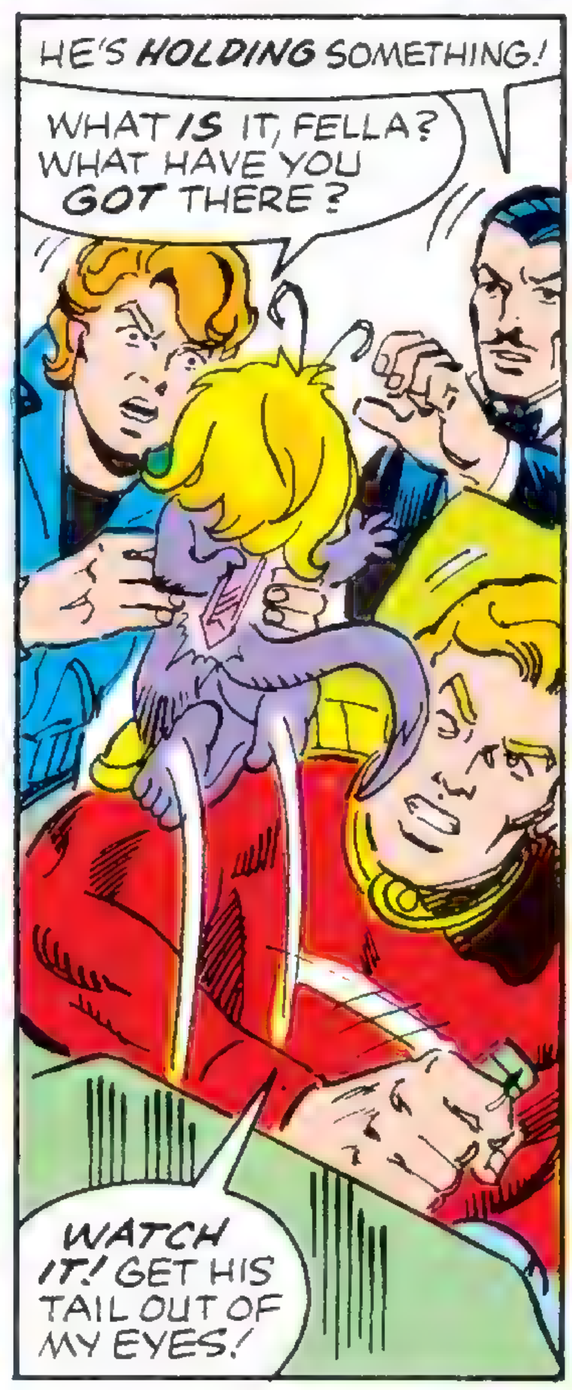
LONG HAVE I PLANNED FOR THIS MOMENT!
SOON, I SHALL CREATE AN INVINCIBLE ARMY! THEY WILL BE MY MEN OF FROST!
MEN OF FROST?
YOUR EDUCATION IN THE WAYS OF VILLAINY AND TERROR IS ABOUT TO BEGIN, KRO-TAN!


SOMETIME LATER, ANOTHER SHIP LEAVES MONGO, BOUND FOR PLANET EARTH...

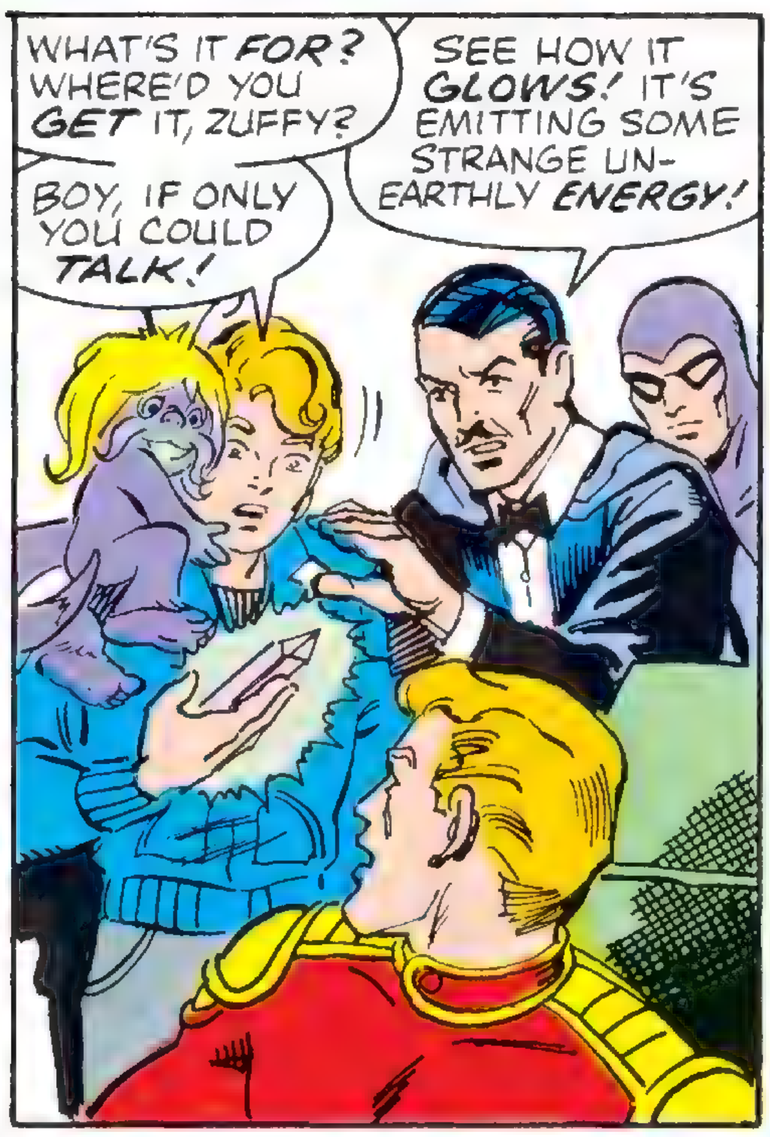

I CANNOT ESCAPE THE FEELING THAT DALE GORDON IS NOT REALLY LOST TO US!
SAVE YOUR BREATH, MANDRAKE. SHE'S GONE FOREVER!
MY INSTINCT, TOO, TELLS ME THERE IS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE!
THEN WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

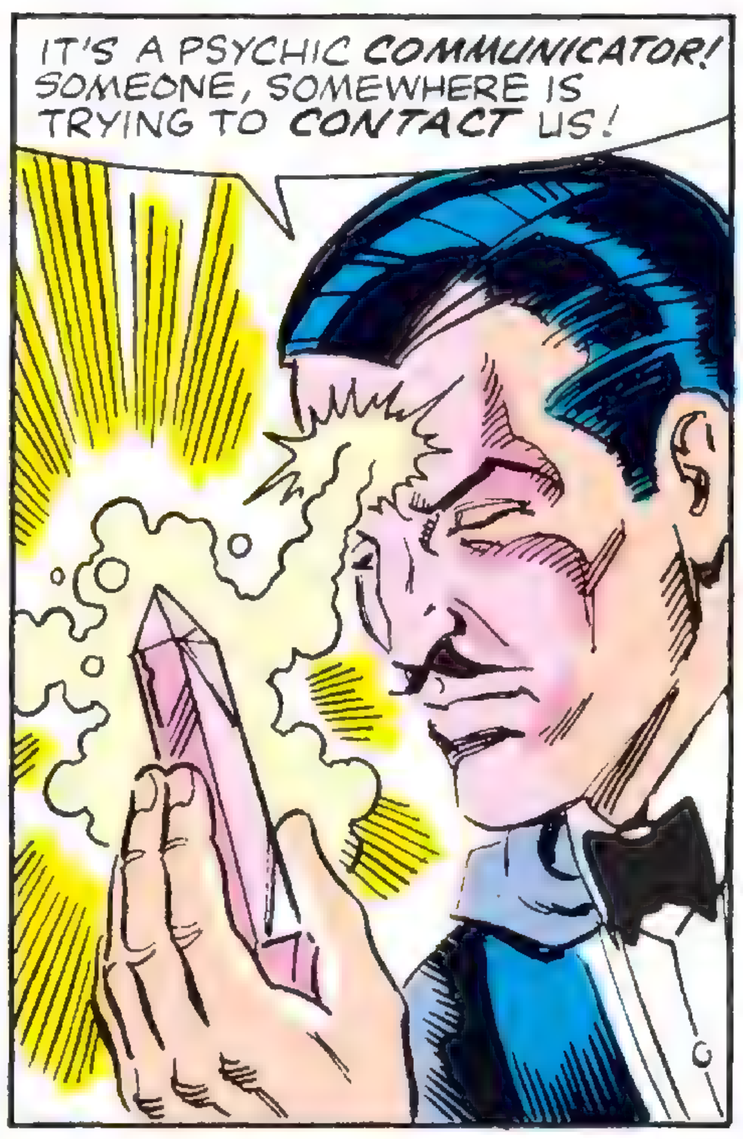

BUT, BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED...
LOOK! WE HAVE A STOWAWAY!


WHY IS HE HOPPING AROUND LIKE THAT?
ZUFFY, KNOCK IT OFF! SETTLE DOWN, HEAR?
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO EXCITED!

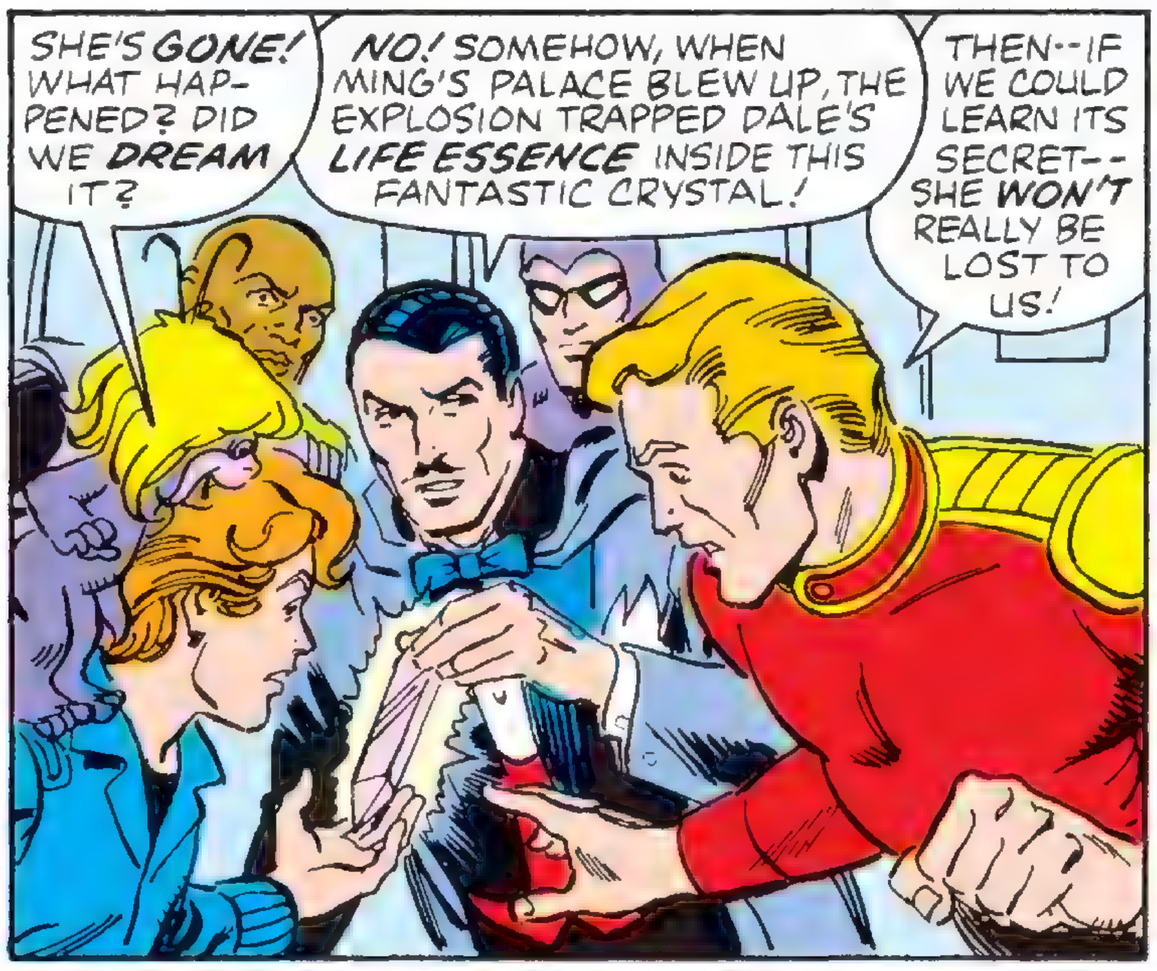

HE'S HOLDING SOMETHING!
WHAT IS IT, FELLA? WHAT HAVE YOU GOT THERE?
WATCH IT! GET HIS TAIL OUT OF MY EYES!

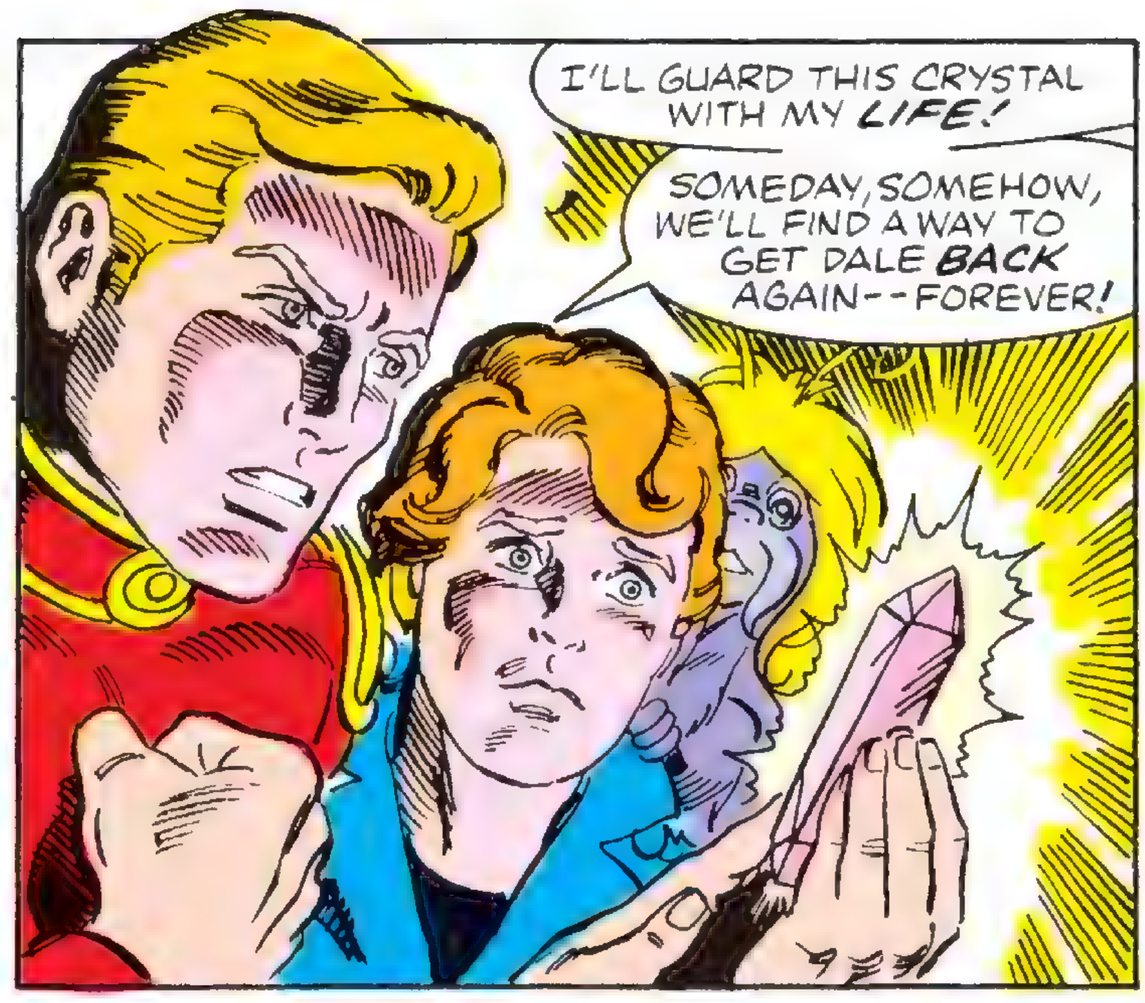
LOOK! IT'S SOME SORT OF CRYSTAL SHARD!

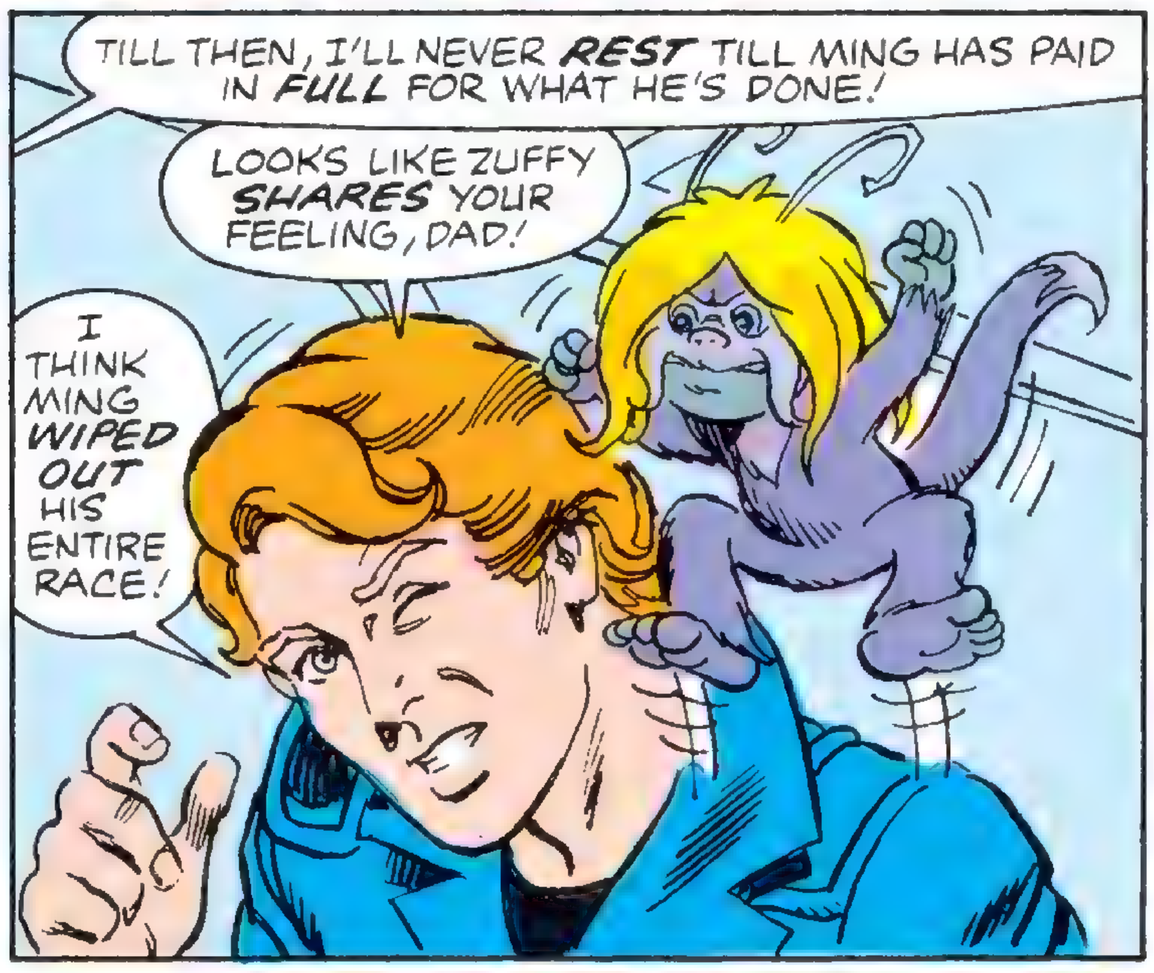

WHAT'S IT FOR? WHERE'D YOU GET IT, ZUFFY?
SEE HOW IT GLOWS! IT'S EMITTING SOME STRANGE UN-EARTHLY ENERGY!
BOY, IF ONLY YOU COULD TALK!

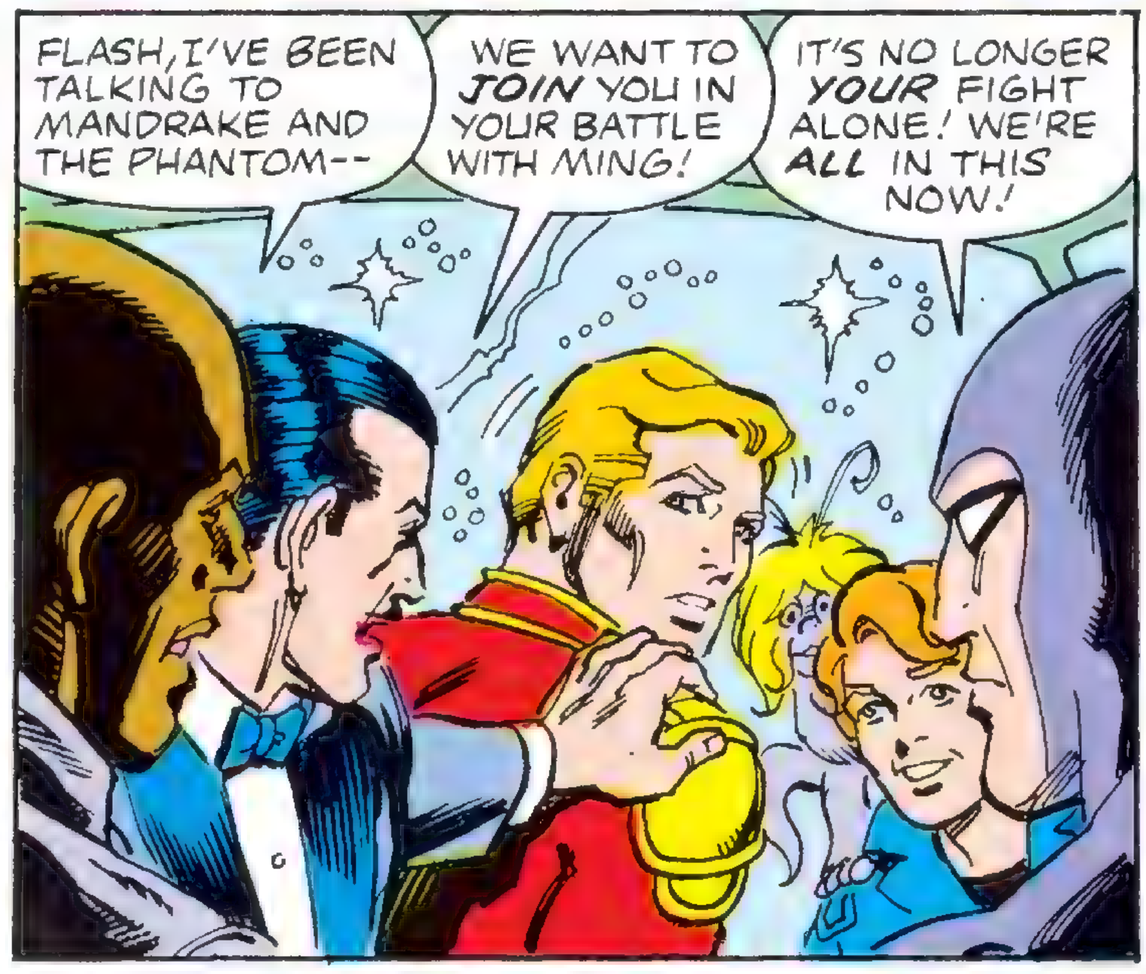

IT'S A PSYCHIC COMMUNICATOR! SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE IS TRYING TO CONTACT US!

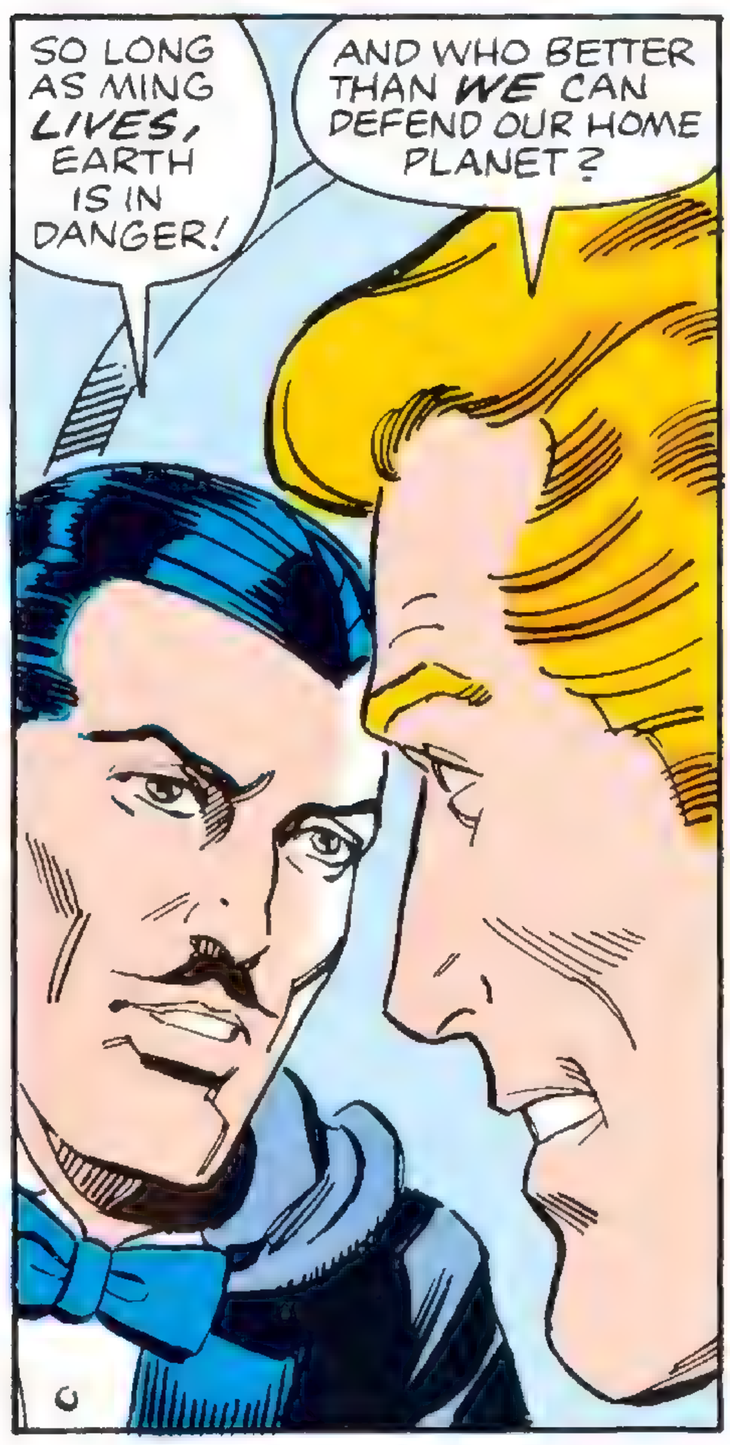
THANK HEAVEN I BROKE THROUGH!
MOM!

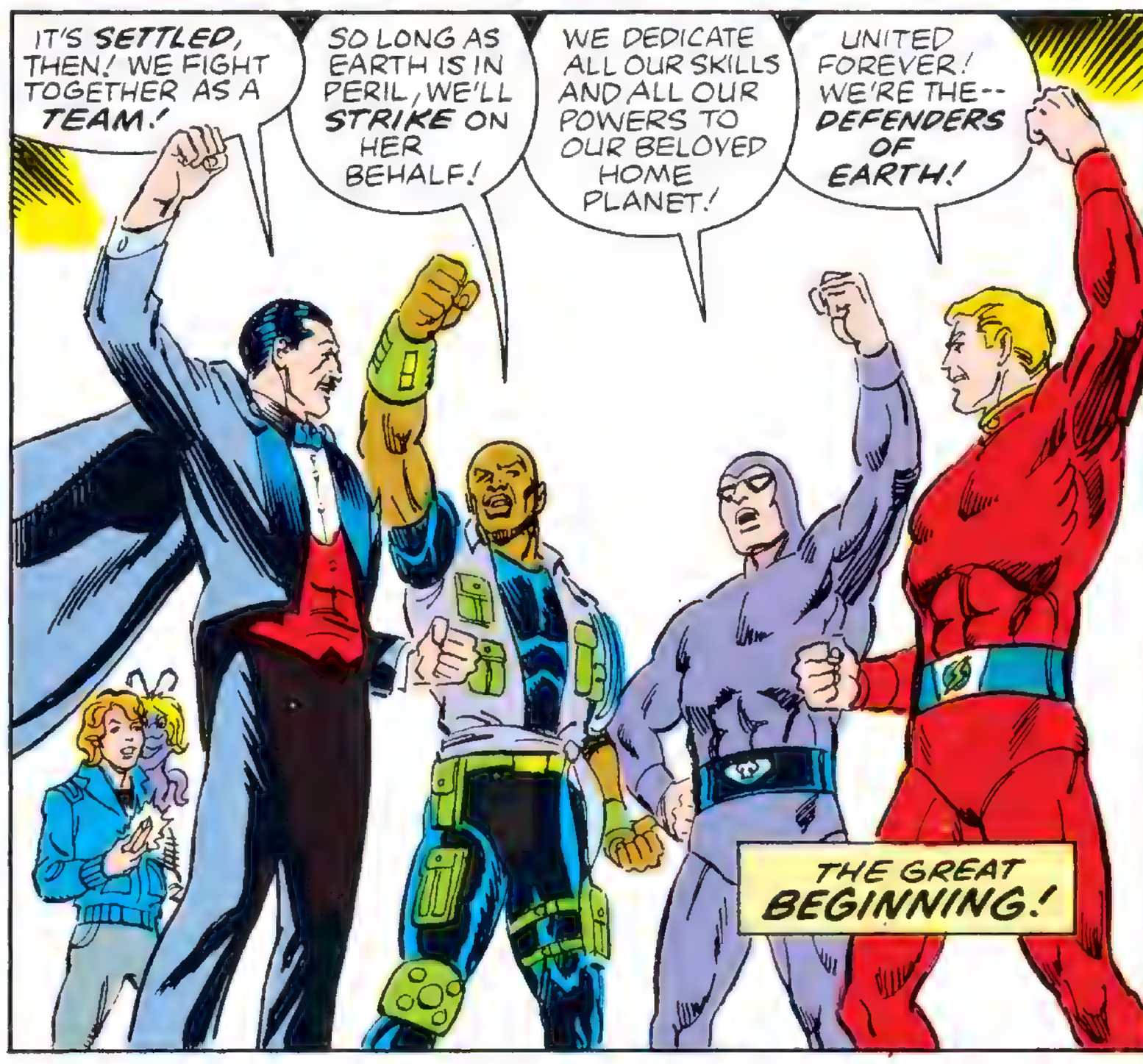

SHE'S GONE! WHAT HAPPENED? DID WE DREAM IT?
NO! SOMEHOW, WHEN MING'S PALACE BLEW UP, THE EXPLOSION TRAPPED DALE'S LIFE ESSENCE INSIDE THIS FANTASTIC CRYSTAL!
THEN--IF WE COULD LEARN ITS SECRET--SHE WON'T REALLY BE LOST TO US!

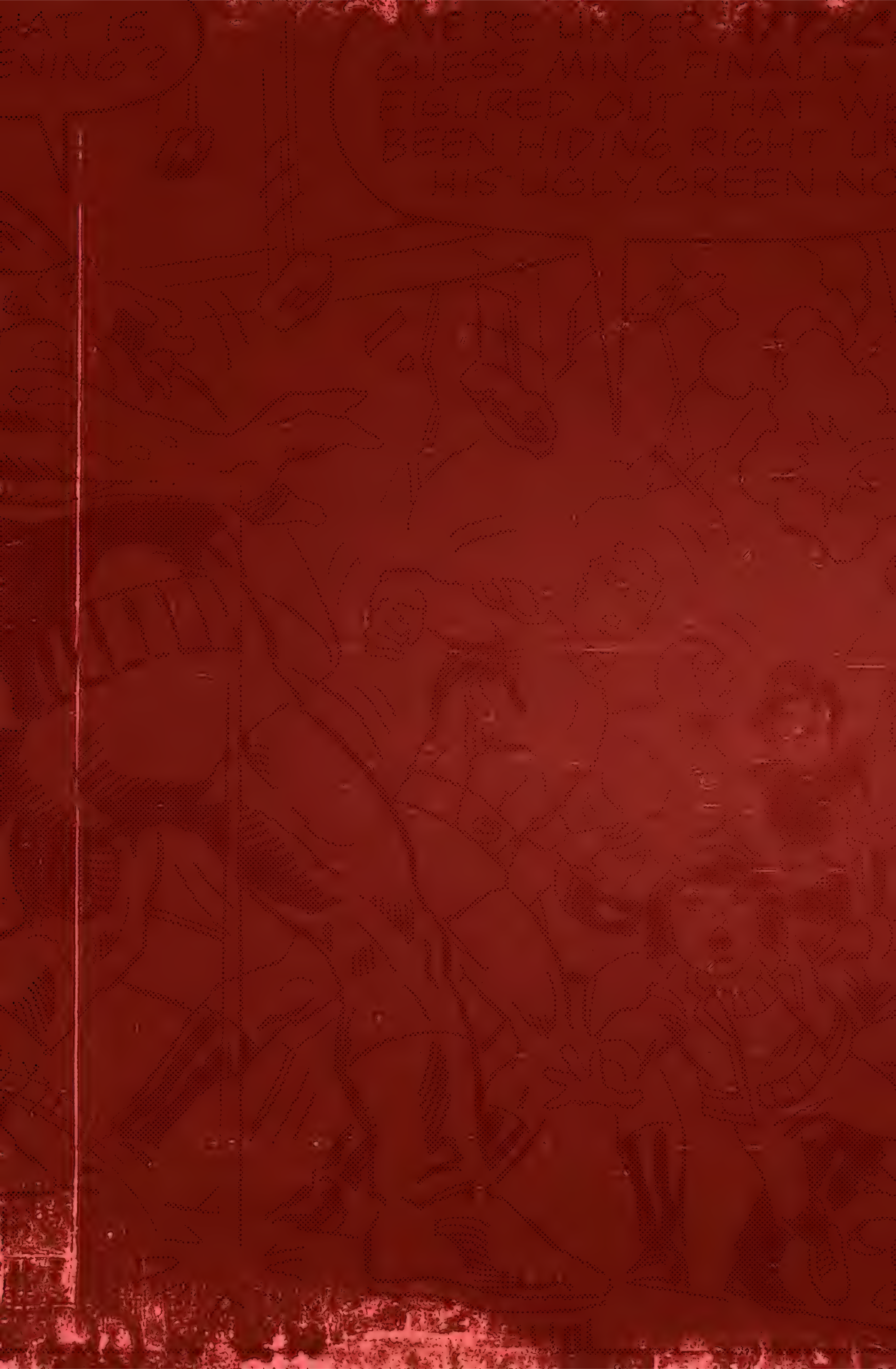

I'LL GUARD THIS CRYSTAL WITH MY LIFE!
SOMEDAY, SOMEHOW, WE'LL FIND A WAY TO GET DALE BACK AGAIN--FOREVER!


TILL THEN, I'LL NEVER REST TILL MING HAS PAID IN FULL FOR WHAT HE'S DONE!
LOOKS LIKE ZUFFY SHARES YOUR FEELING, DAD!
I THINK MING WIPED OUT HIS ENTIRE RACE!


FLASH, I'VE BEEN TALKING TO MANDRAKE AND THE PHANTOM--
WE WANT TO JOIN YOU IN YOUR BATTLE WITH MING!
IT'S NO LONGER YOUR FIGHT ALONE! WE'RE ALL IN THIS NOW!


SO LONG AS MING LIVES, EARTH IS IN DANGER!
AND WHO BETTER THAN WE CAN DEFEND OUR HOME PLANET?


IT'S SETTLED, THEN! WE FIGHT TOGETHER AS A TEAM!
SO LONG AS EARTH IS IN PERIL, WE'LL STRIKE ON HER BEHALF!
WE DEDICATE ALL OUR SKILLS AND ALL OUR POWERS TO OUR BELOVED HOME PLANET!
UNITED FOREVER! WE'RE THE--DEFENDERS OF EARTH!
THE GREAT BEGINNING!


WE'RE UNDER
GUESS WE FINALLY
FIGURED OUT THAT W
BEEN HIDING RIGHT U
HIS UGLY GREEN NO

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DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH
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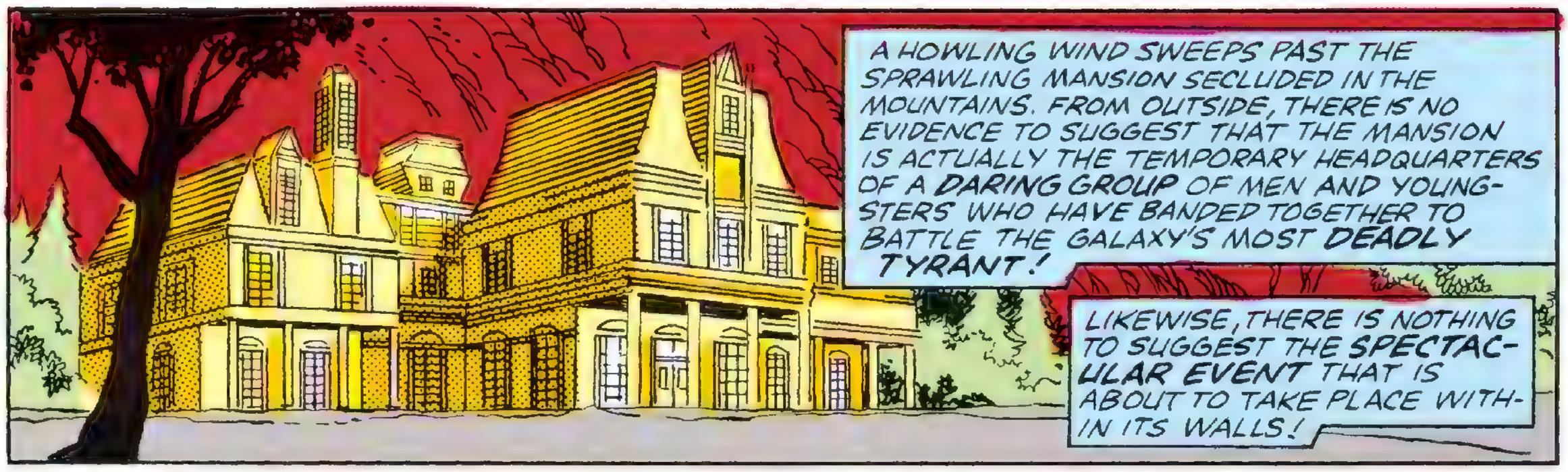


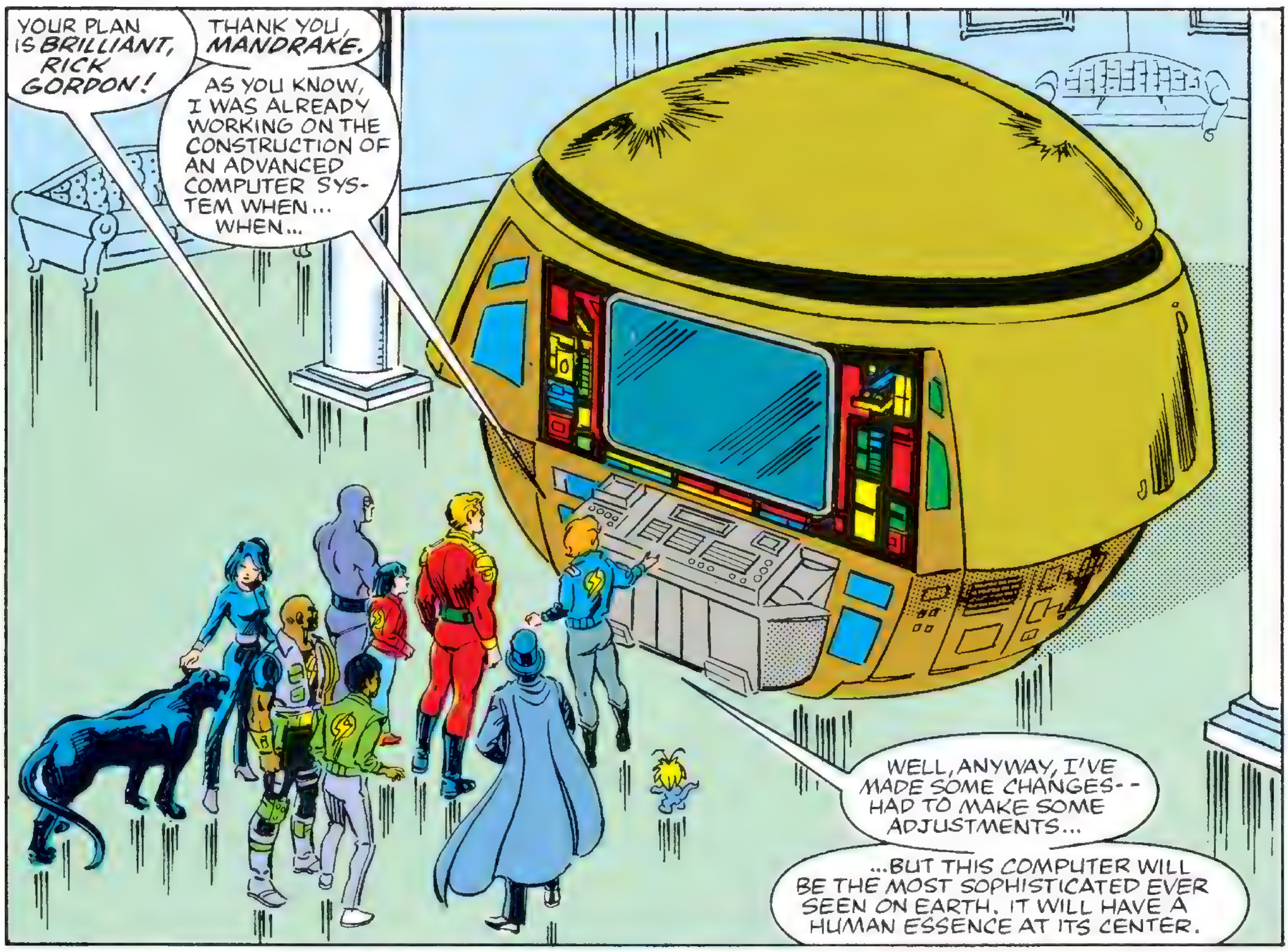

# CREATION

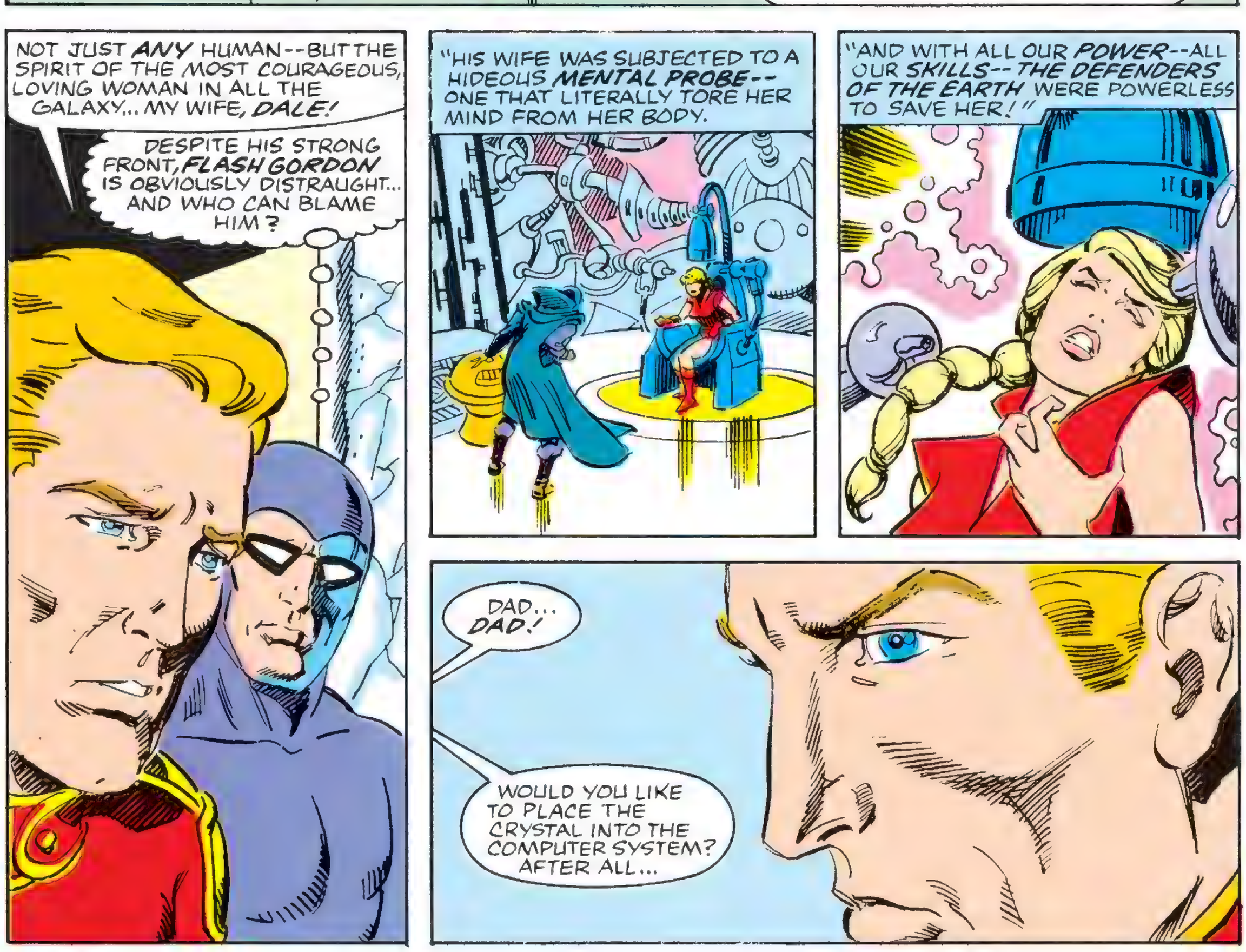
THIS IS IT-- THIS IS ALL THAT REMAINS OF MY MOTHER! HER LIFE ESSENCE IS CONTAINED WITHIN THIS FANTASTIC CRYSTAL SHARD, CREATED WHEN HER LIFE WAS SNUFFED OUT BY MING'S INQUISITOR ON THE PLANET MONGO!

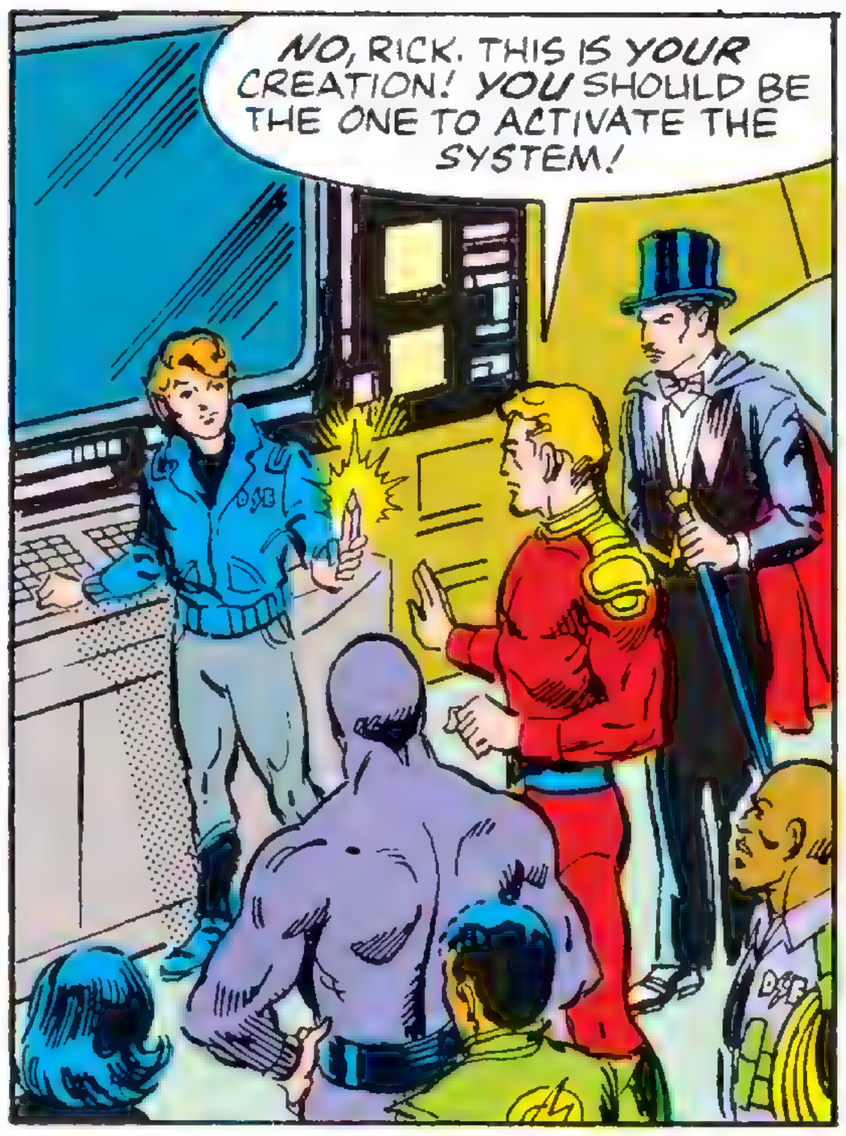
TAKE IT EASY, SON!

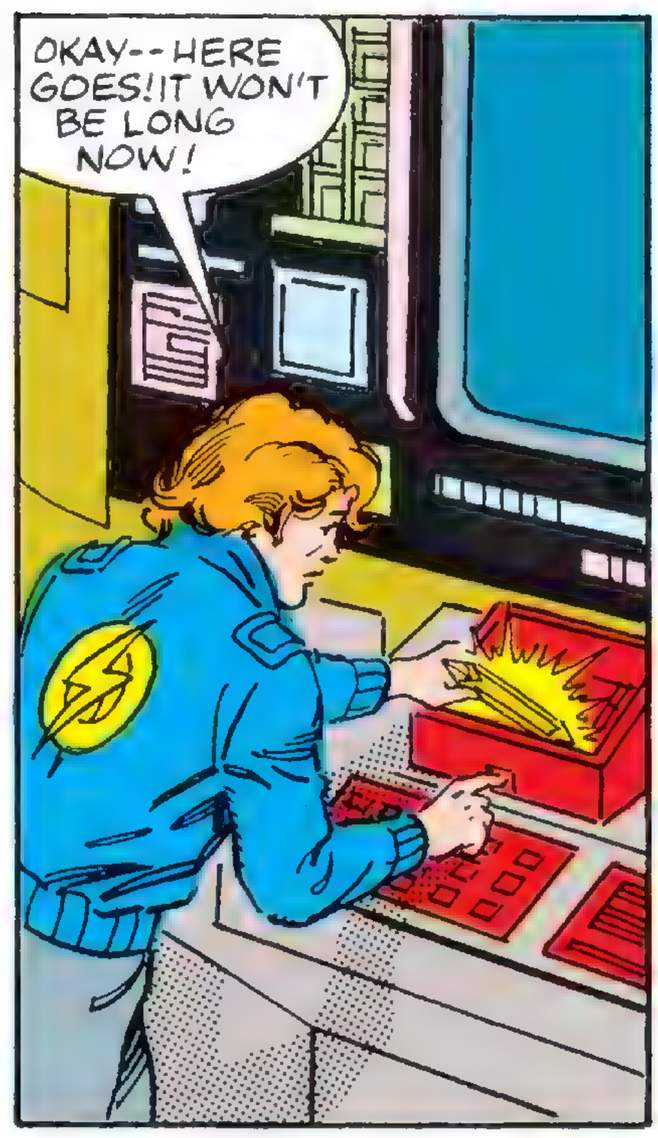
SHE WAS A WOMAN OF VALIANT SPIRIT. WE WILL ALL MISS HER. PERHAPS WE CAN SEEK SOLACE IN THE NOTION THAT EVEN WHEN A LIFE IS CALLOUSLY ENDED, THE SPIRIT MAY LIVE ON!

MICHAEL HIGGINS
WRITER
ALEX SAVIUK
PENCILER
FRED FREDERICKS
INKER
KEN LOPEZ
LETTERER
NEL YOMTOV
COLORIST
HOWARD MACKIE
EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

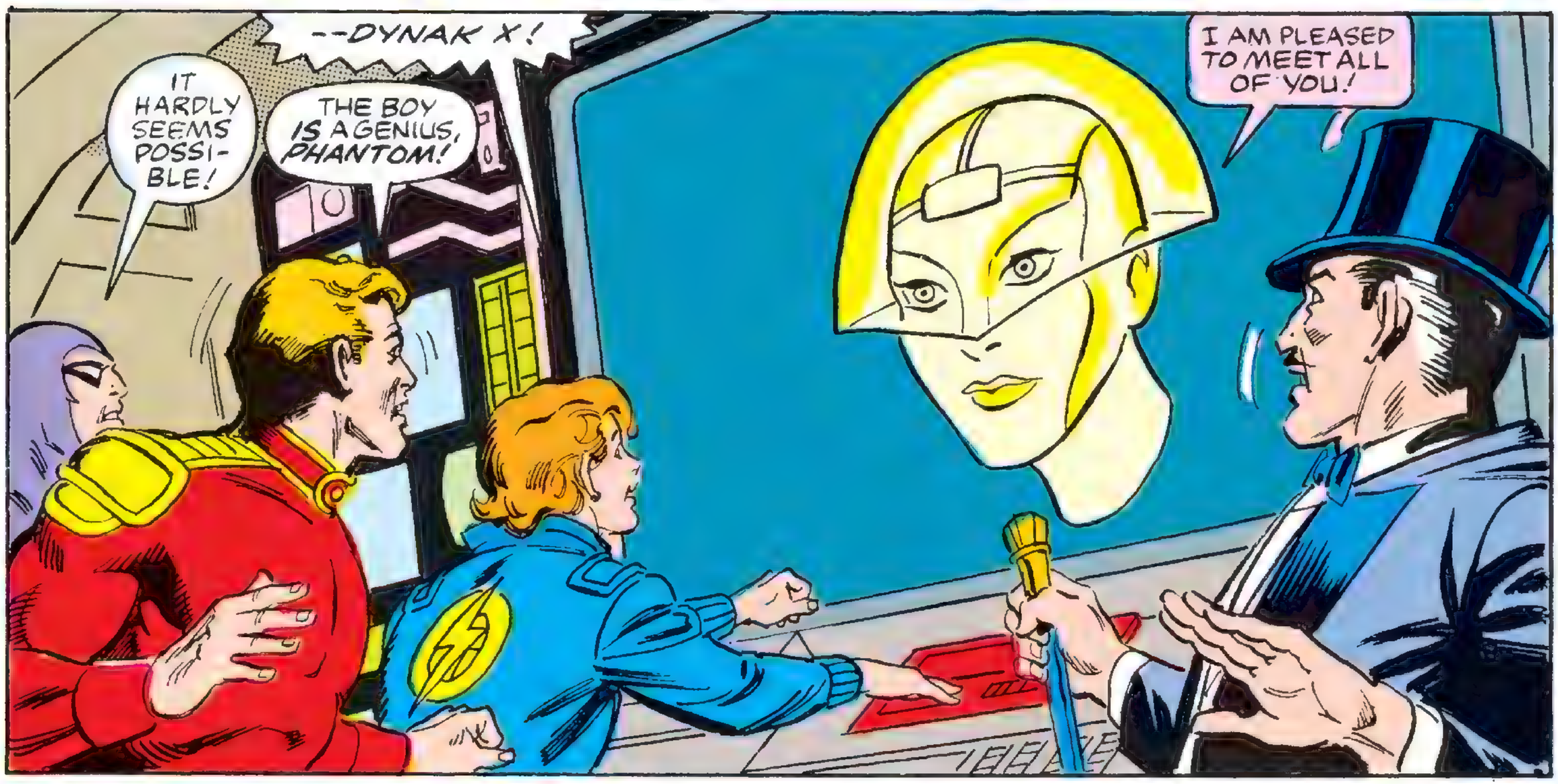

YOUR PLAN IS BRILLIANT, RICK GORDON!
THANK YOU, MANDRAKE.
AS YOU KNOW, I WAS ALREADY WORKING ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ADVANCED COMPUTER SYSTEM WHEN... WHEN...
WELL, ANYWAY, I'VE MADE SOME CHANGES-- HAD TO MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS...
...BUT THIS COMPUTER WILL BE THE MOST SOPHISTICATED EVER SEEN ON EARTH. IT WILL HAVE A HUMAN ESSENCE AT ITS CENTER.


NOT JUST ANY HUMAN--BUT THE SPIRIT OF THE MOST COURAGEOUS, LOVING WOMAN IN ALL THE GALAXY... MY WIFE, DALE!
DESPITE HIS STRONG FRONT, FLASH GORDON IS OBVIOUSLY DISTRAUGHT... AND WHO CAN BLAME HIM?
"HIS WIFE WAS SUBJECTED TO A HIDEOUS MENTAL PROBE-- ONE THAT LITERALLY TORE HER MIND FROM HER BODY.
"AND WITH ALL OUR POWER--ALL OUR SKILLS--THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH WERE POWERLESS TO SAVE HER!"
DAD... DAD!
WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLACE THE CRYSTAL INTO THE COMPUTER SYSTEM? AFTER ALL...


NO, RICK. THIS IS YOUR CREATION! YOU SHOULD BE THE ONE TO ACTIVATE THE SYSTEM!

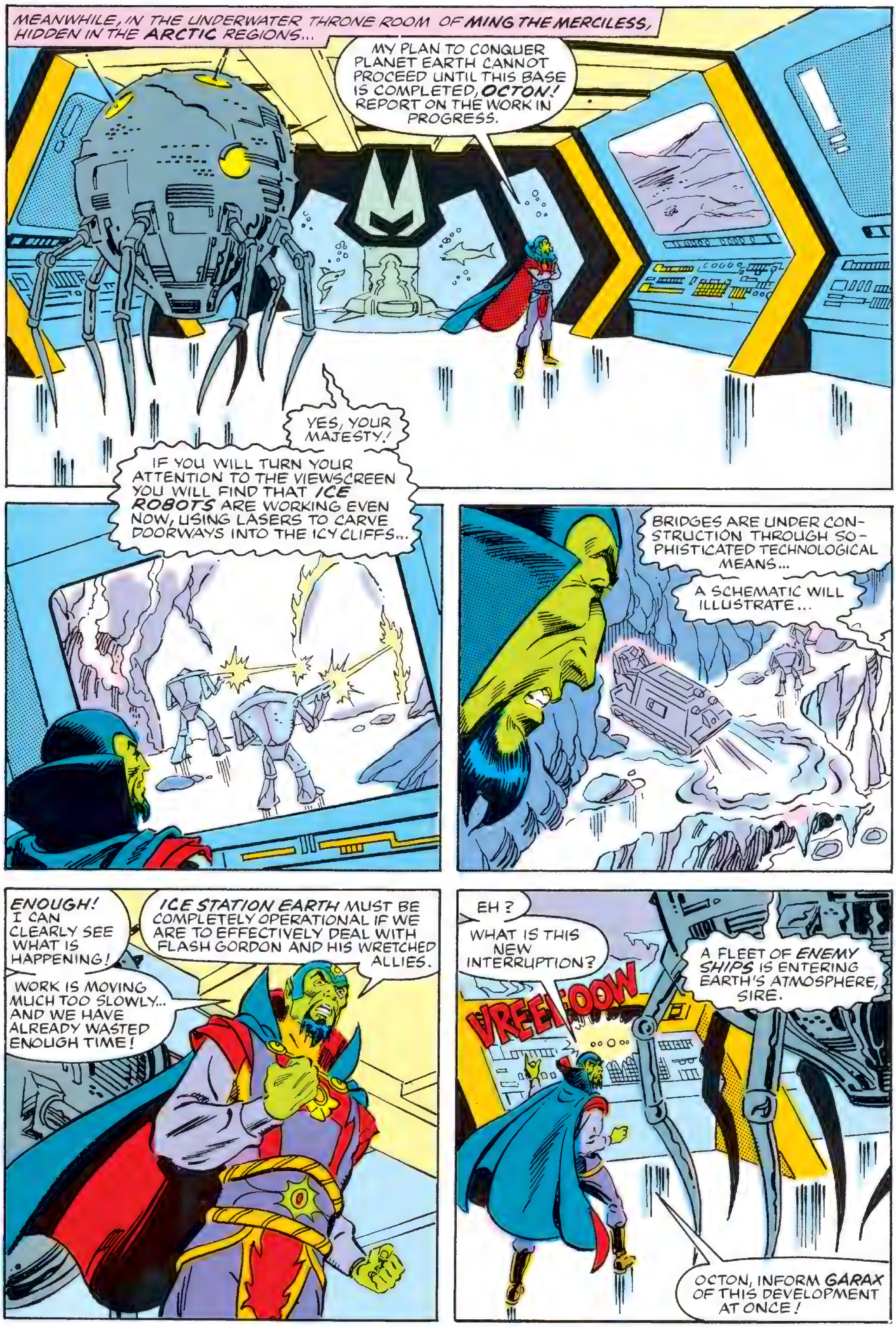

OKAY--HERE GOES! IT WON'T BE LONG NOW!

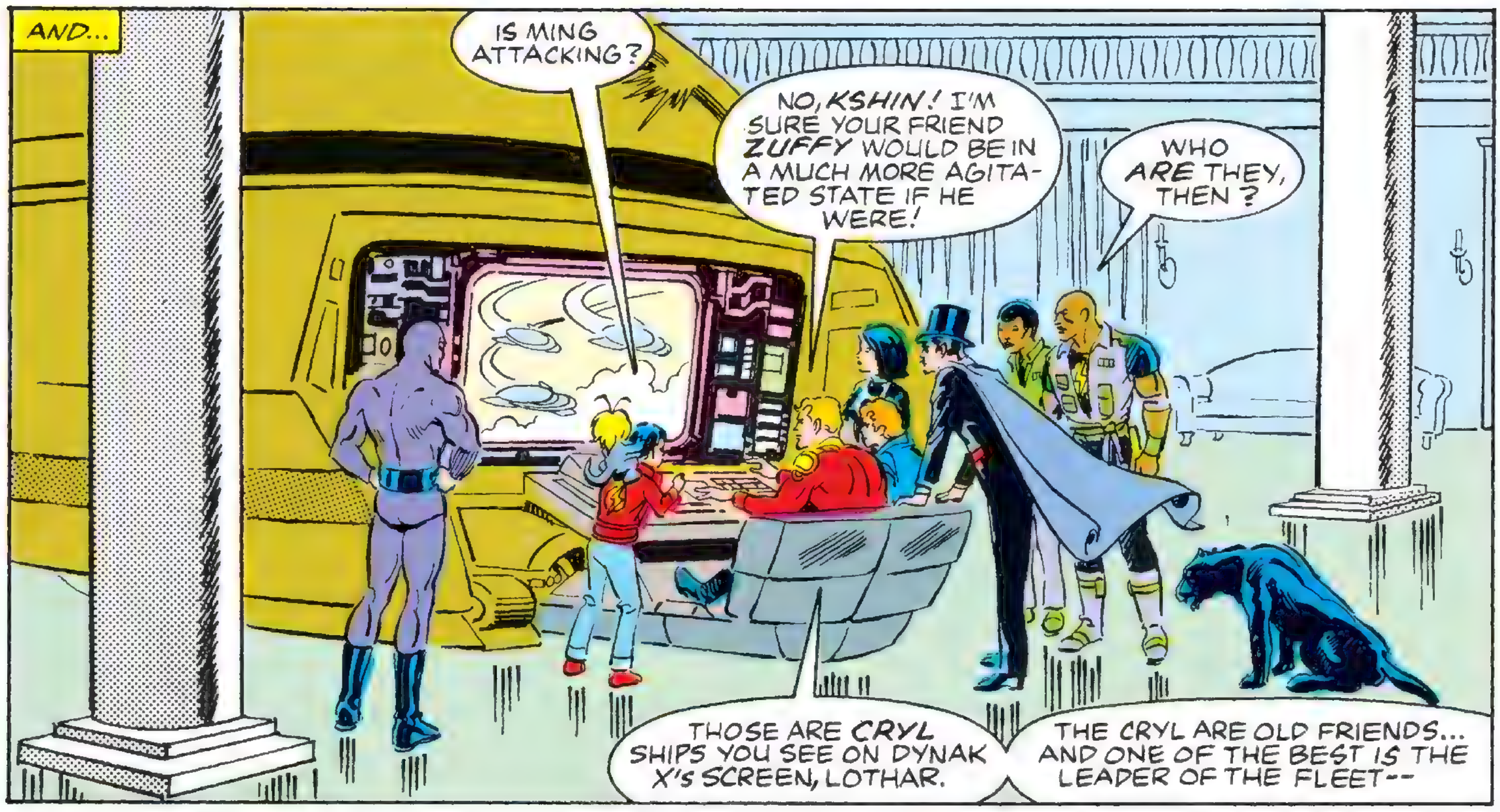
A LITTLE FINE TUNING AND EVERYTHING SHOULD BE SET!
ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE--

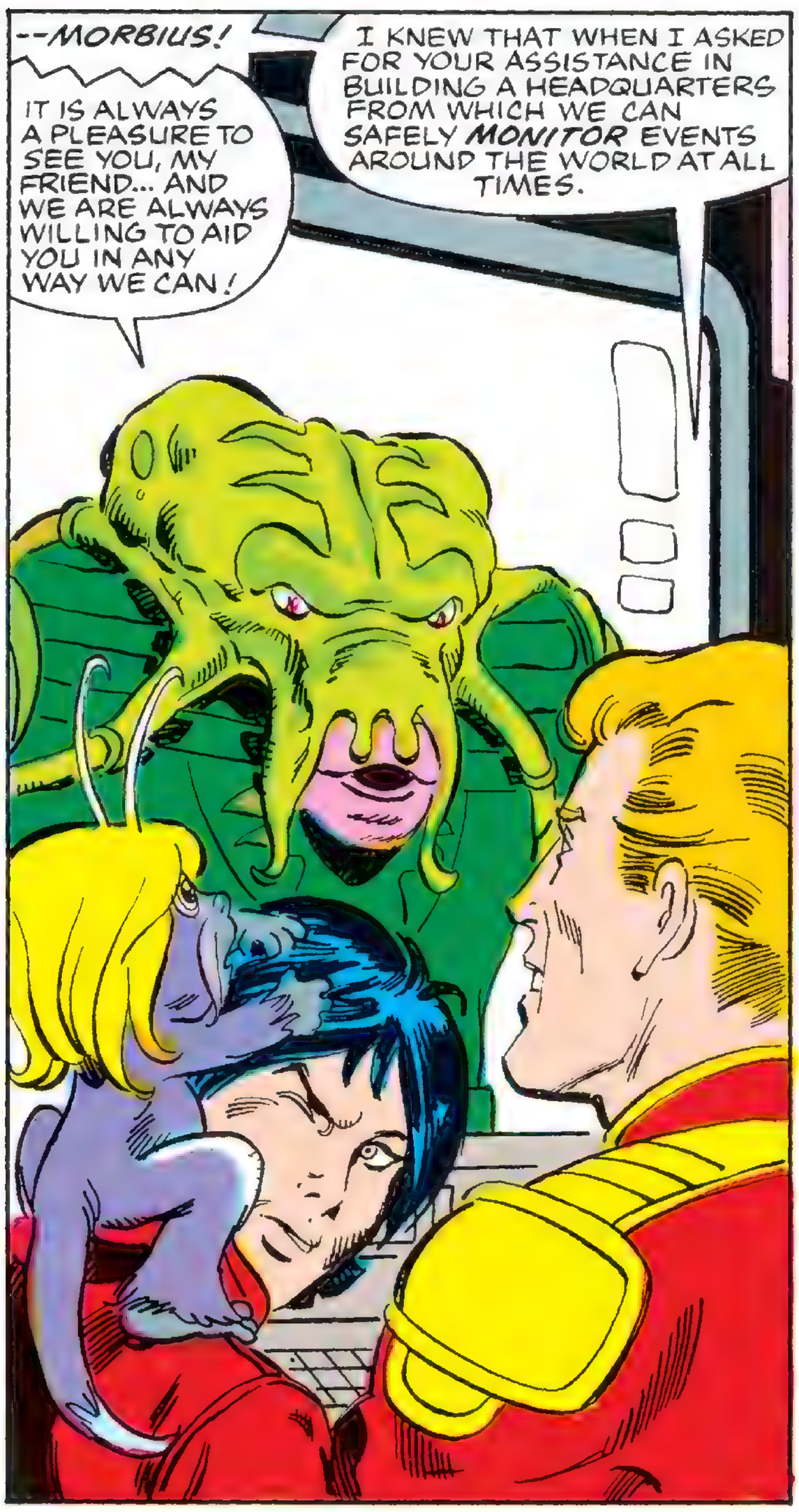

--DYNAK X!
IT HARDLY SEEMS POSSIBLE!
THE BOY IS A GENIUS, PHANTOM!
I AM PLEASED TO MEET ALL OF YOU!

THIS IS GREAT!
IT CERTAINLY IS, KSHIN! AND WHAT A LIVING TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF DALE ARDEN GORDON!
I'M SO PROUD OF YOU, RICK!
THANK YOU, JEDDA!
THIS IS INDEED A MOMENT OF CELEBRATION--

-- BUT NOW WE MUST TURN OUR MINDS TO OTHER THINGS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
CERTAINLY AN OPERATION LIKE OURS CANNOT BE RUN OUT OF A BALLROOM.
AHEM WELL, PHANTOM, YOU ARE... SURELY CORRECT. BUT, EXACTLY WHAT TYPE OF HEADQUARTERS DO WE NEED?

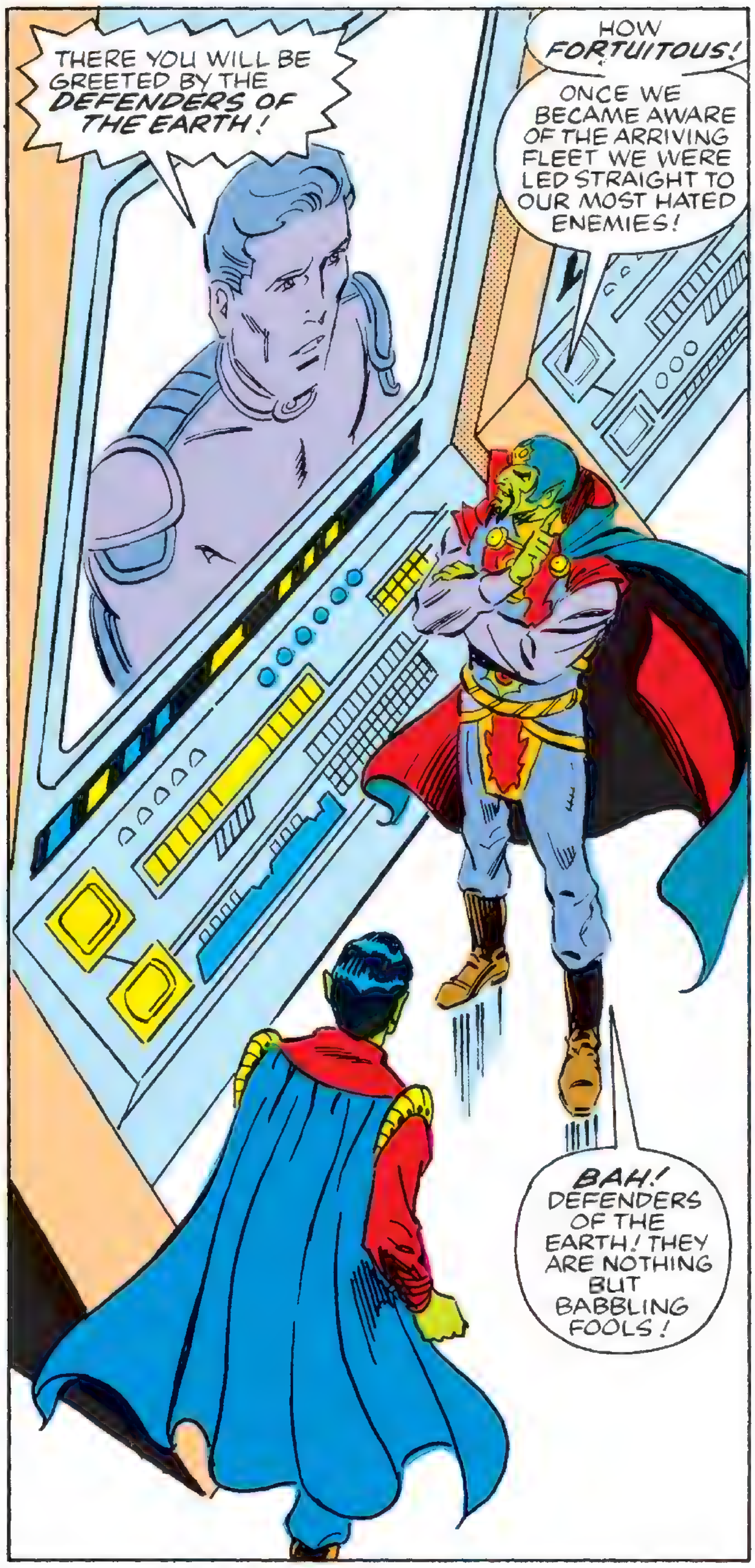

MEANWHILE, IN THE UNDERWATER THRONE ROOM OF MING THE MERCILESS, HIDDEN IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS...
MY PLAN TO CONQUER PLANET EARTH CANNOT PROCEED UNTIL THIS BASE IS COMPLETED, OCTON! REPORT ON THE WORK IN PROGRESS.
YES, YOUR MAJESTY!
IF YOU WILL TURN YOUR ATTENTION TO THE VIEWSCREEN YOU WILL FIND THAT ICE ROBOTS ARE WORKING EVEN NOW, USING LASERS TO CARVE DOORWAYS INTO THE ICY CLIFFS...
BRIDGES ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION THROUGH SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGICAL MEANS...
A SCHEMATIC WILL ILLUSTRATE...
ENOUGH! I CAN CLEARLY SEE WHAT IS HAPPENING!
ICE STATION EARTH MUST BE COMPLETELY OPERATIONAL IF WE ARE TO EFFECTIVELY DEAL WITH FLASH GORDON AND HIS WRETCHED ALLIES.
WORK IS MOVING MUCH TOO SLOWLY... AND WE HAVE ALREADY WASTED ENOUGH TIME!
EH?
WHAT IS THIS NEW INTERRUPTION?
VREEEOOW
A FLEET OF ENEMY SHIPS IS ENTERING EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE, SIRE.
OCTON, INFORM GARAX OF THIS DEVELOPMENT AT ONCE!

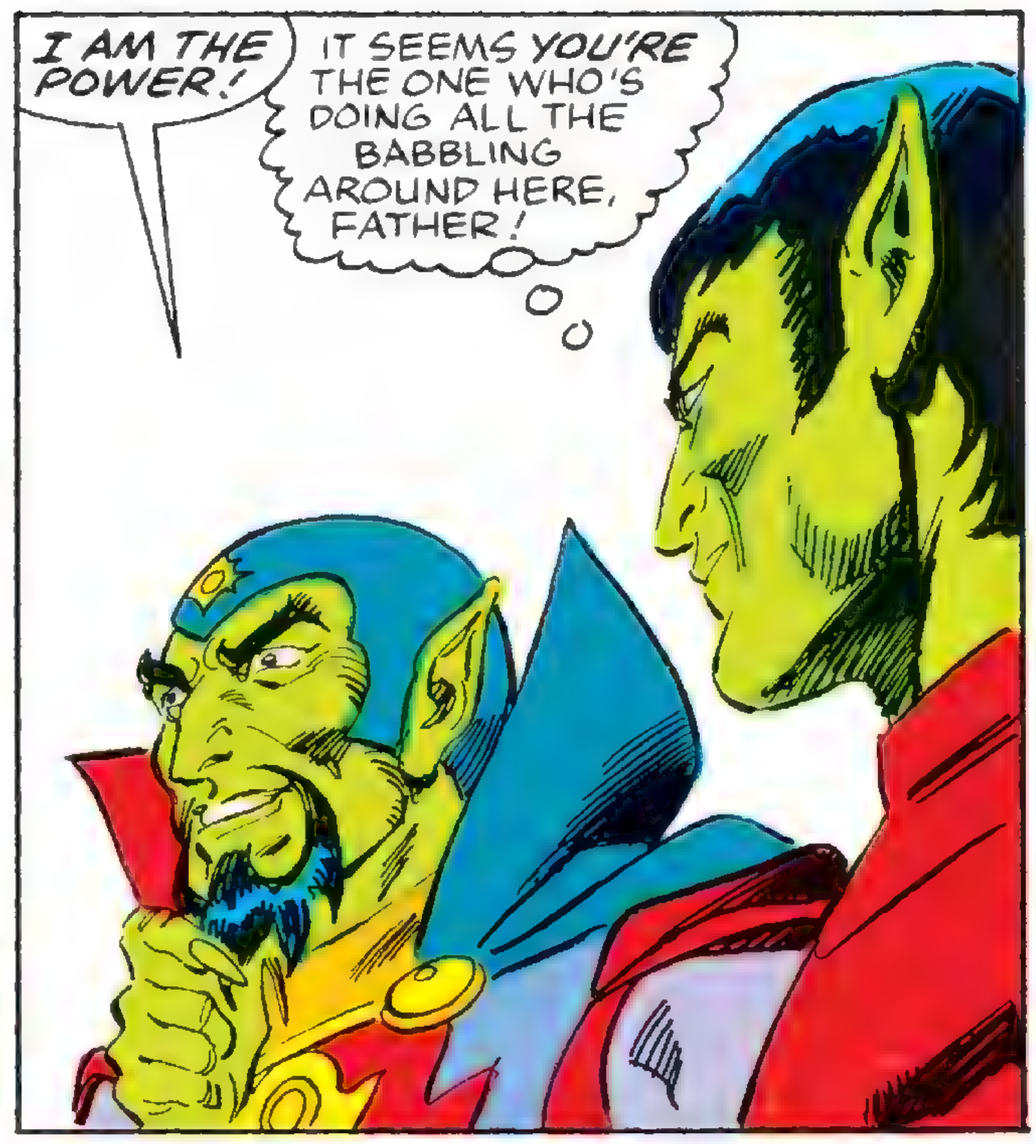

AND...
IS MING ATTACKING?
NO, KSHIN! I'M SURE YOUR FRIEND ZUFFY WOULD BE IN A MUCH MORE AGITATED STATE IF HE WERE!
WHO ARE THEY, THEN?
THOSE ARE CRYL SHIPS YOU SEE ON DYNAK X'S SCREEN, LOTHAR.
THE CRYL ARE OLD FRIENDS... AND ONE OF THE BEST IS THE LEADER OF THE FLEET--


--MORBIUS!
IT IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU, MY FRIEND... AND WE ARE ALWAYS WILLING TO AID YOU IN ANY WAY WE CAN!
I KNEW THAT WHEN I ASKED FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE IN BUILDING A HEADQUARTERS FROM WHICH WE CAN SAFELY MONITOR EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD AT ALL TIMES.

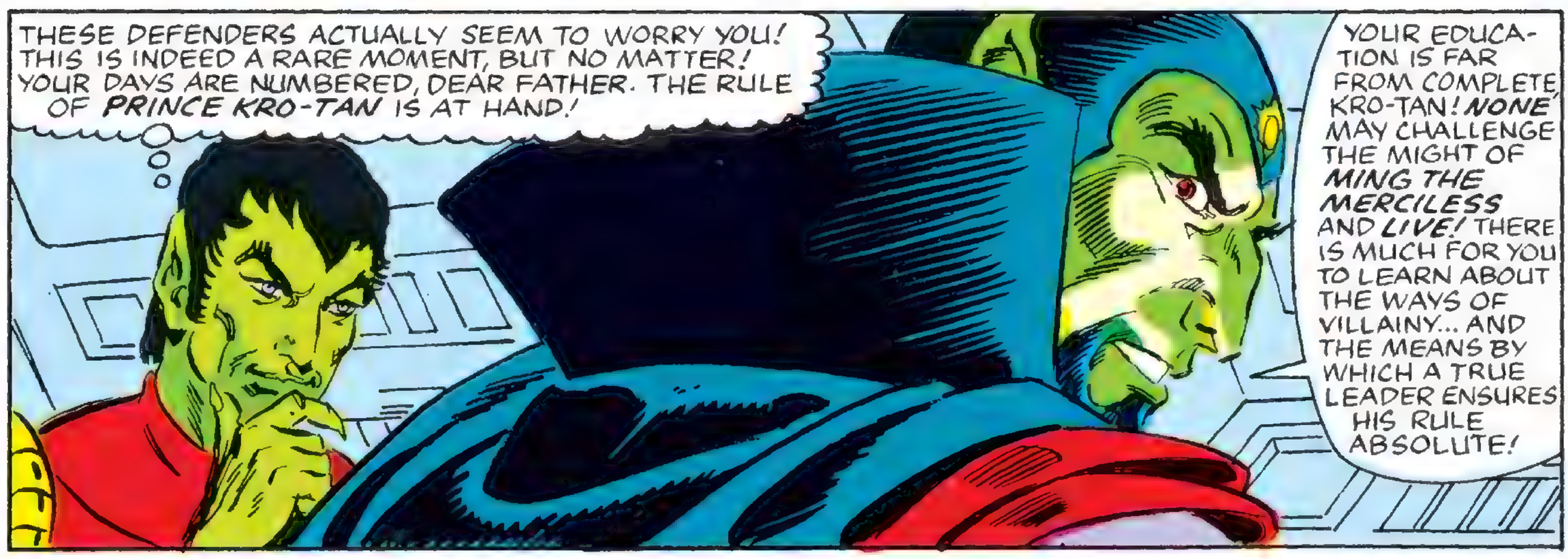
WHEN DID YOU--?
IT LOOKS LIKE FLASH IS ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE REST OF US!
HMMM. MONITOR WOULD BE A PERFECT NAME FOR OUR H.Q.
THAT'S IT, L.J.!

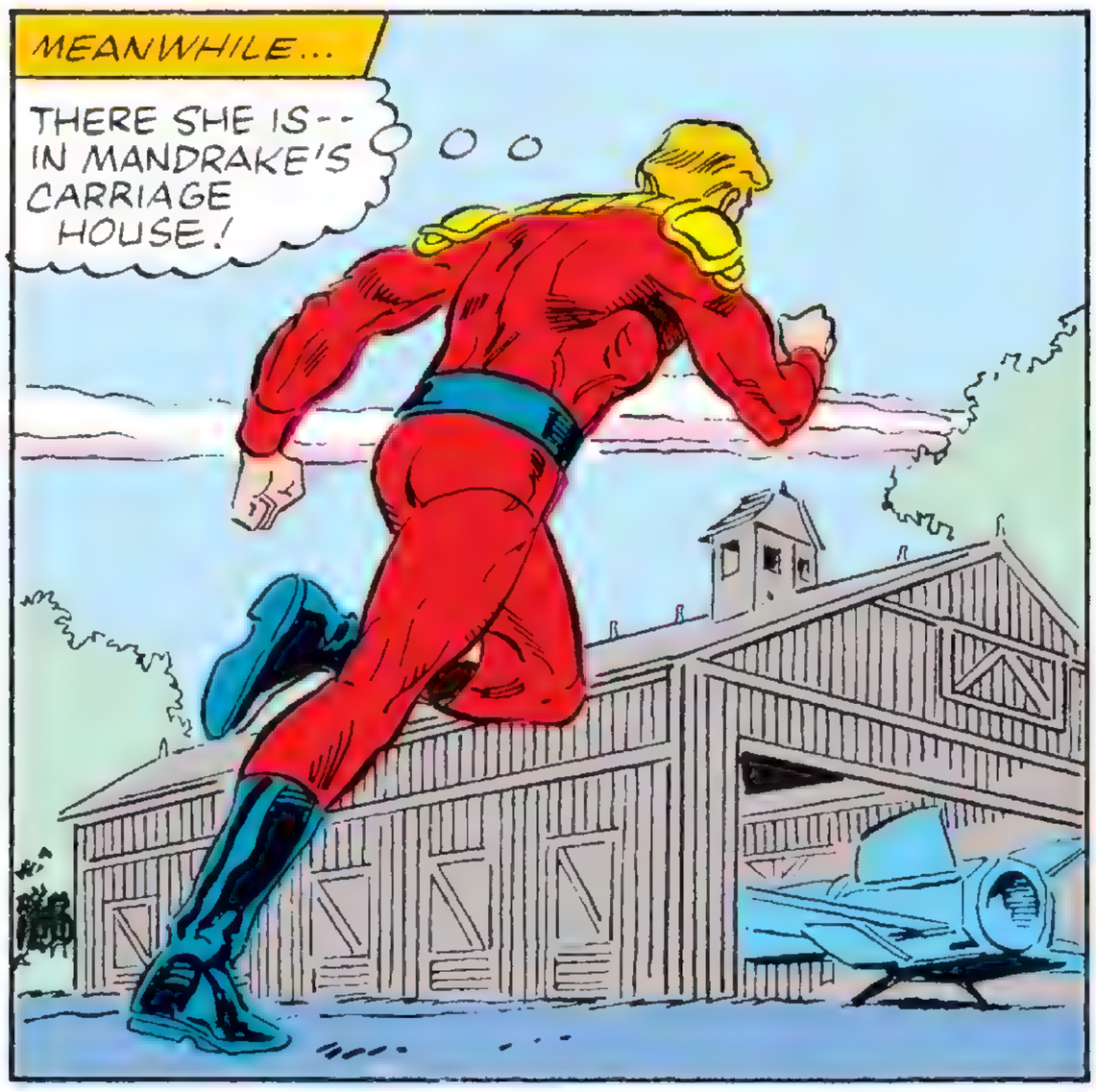
THE CRYL ARE MASTER BUILDERS-- THE BEST IN THIS ENTIRE GALAXY. THEY'LL BE ABLE TO HELP US BUILD MONITOR IN A MATTER OF A FEW SHORT WEEKS.
PROCEED ON COURSE, MORBIUS. I'LL FLY OUT AND ESCORT YOU TO THE NEARBY CLIFFS.

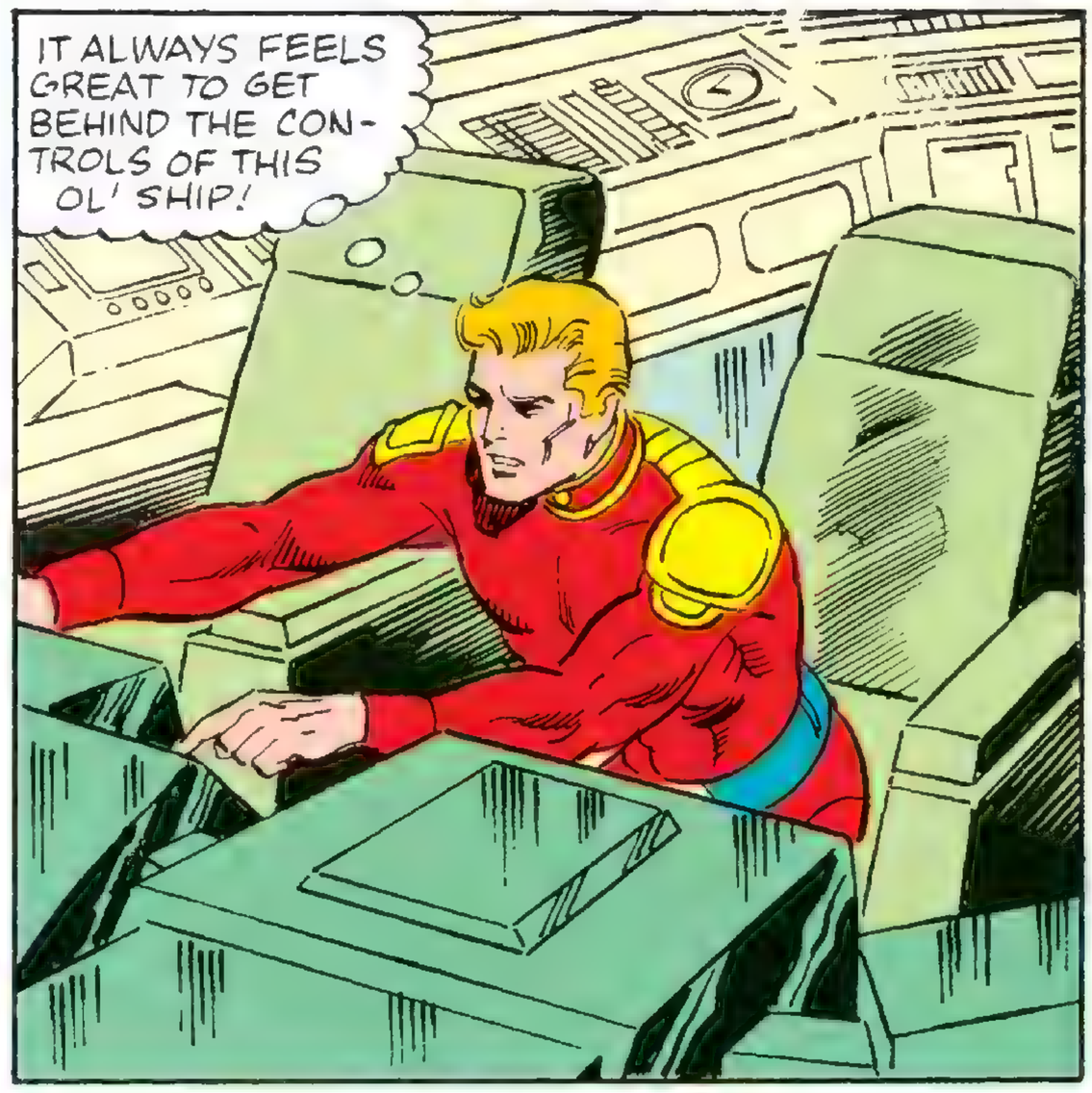

THERE YOU WILL BE GREETED BY THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH!
HOW FORTUITOUS!
ONCE WE BECAME AWARE OF THE ARRIVING FLEET WE WERE LED STRAIGHT TO OUR MOST HATED ENEMIES!
BAH! DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH! THEY ARE NOTHING BUT BABBLING FOOLS!

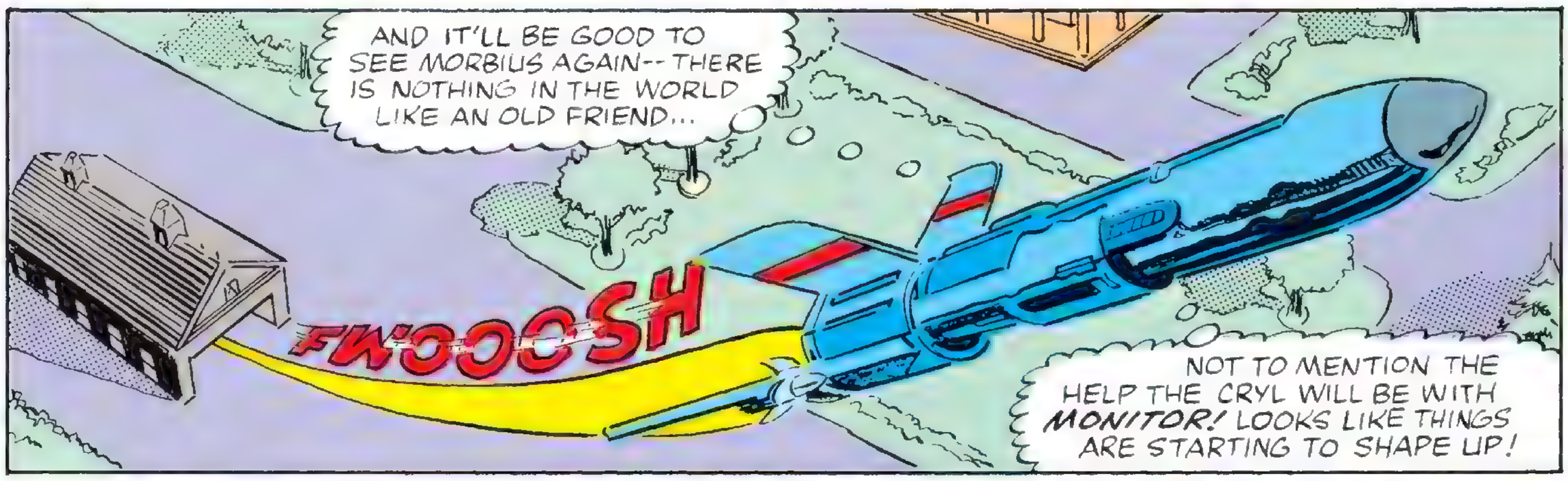

I AM THE POWER!
IT SEEMS YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S DOING ALL THE BABBLING AROUND HERE, FATHER!

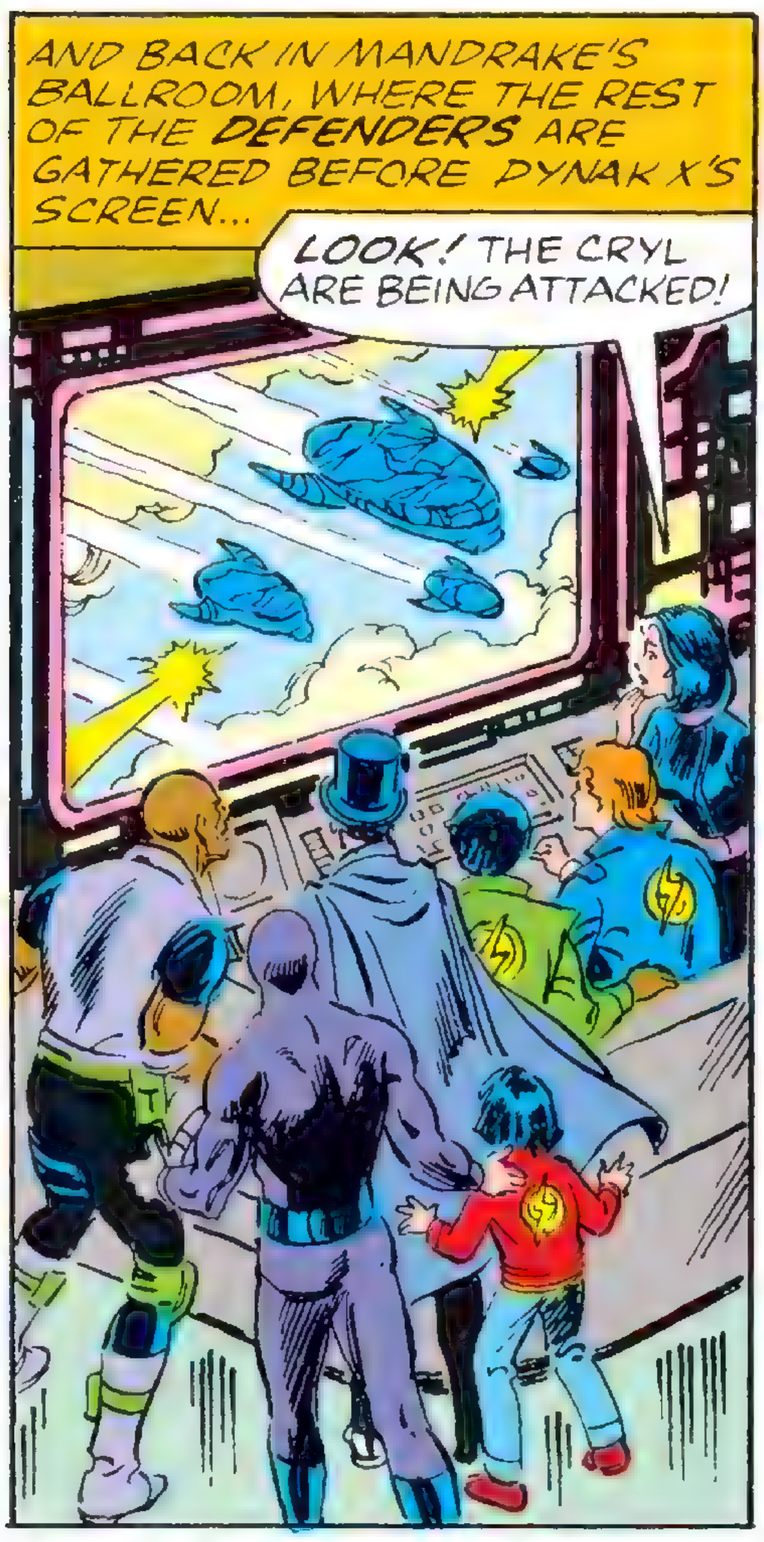
WE HAVE BROKEN THEIR COMPUTER CODE. WE CAN EASILY PIN-POINT THE LOCATION OF THESE SELF-PROCLAIMED "DEFENDERS"!
EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT! IN THE MEANTIME, ORDER GARAX AND THE ICE ROBOTS TO READY THE ROBOSHIPS AND INTERCEPT THESE ALIEN CRYL. THEY ARE TO BE DESTROYED BEFORE THEY CAN ARRIVE TO ASSIST THE ENEMY.


THESE DEFENDERS ACTUALLY SEEM TO WORRY YOU! THIS IS INDEED A RARE MOMENT, BUT NO MATTER! YOUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED, DEAR FATHER. THE RULE OF PRINCE KRO-TAN IS AT HAND!
YOUR EDUCATION IS FAR FROM COMPLETE, KRO-TAN! NONE MAY CHALLENGE THE MIGHT OF MING THE MERCILESS AND LIVE! THERE IS MUCH FOR YOU TO LEARN ABOUT THE WAYS OF VILLAINY... AND THE MEANS BY WHICH A TRUE LEADER ENSURES HIS RULE ABSOLUTE!

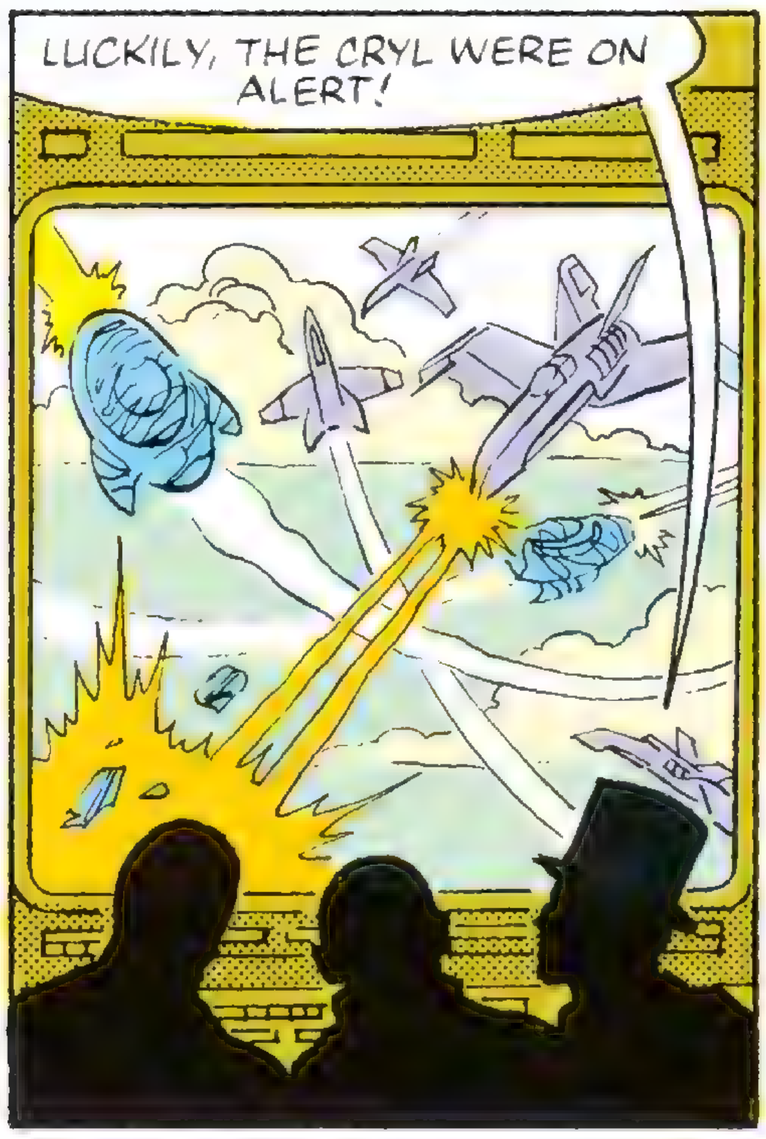

MEANWHILE...
THERE SHE IS-- IN MANDRAKE'S CARRIAGE HOUSE!

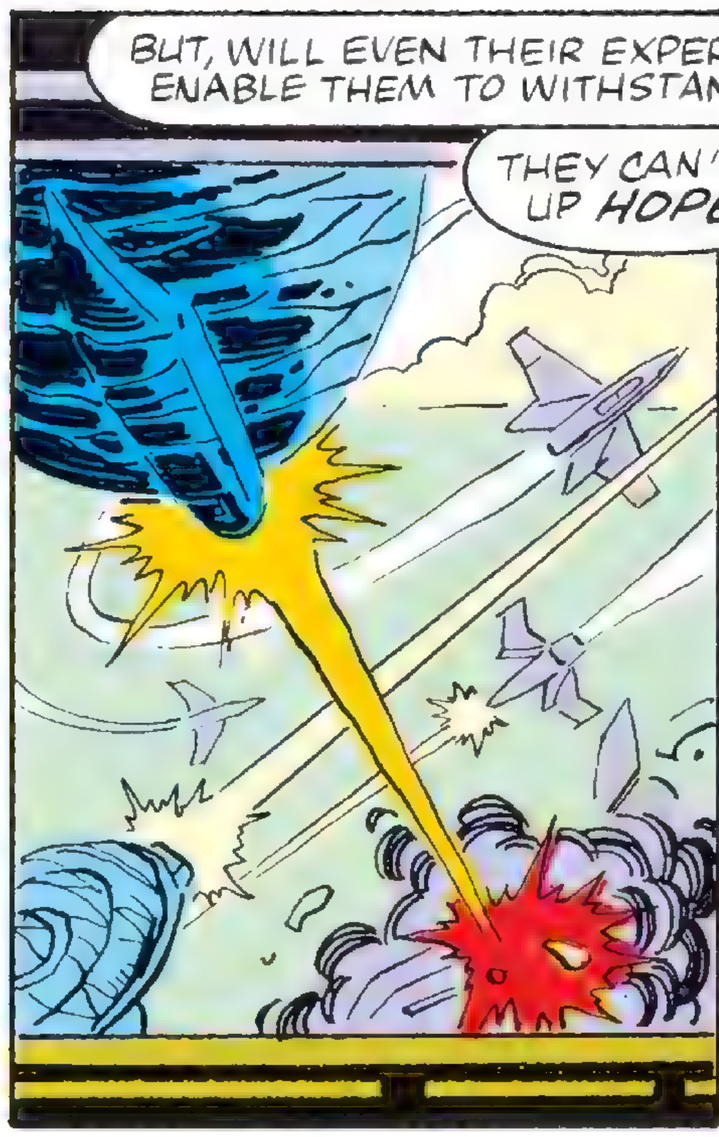

IT ALWAYS FEELS GREAT TO GET BEHIND THE CONTROLS OF THIS OL' SHIP!

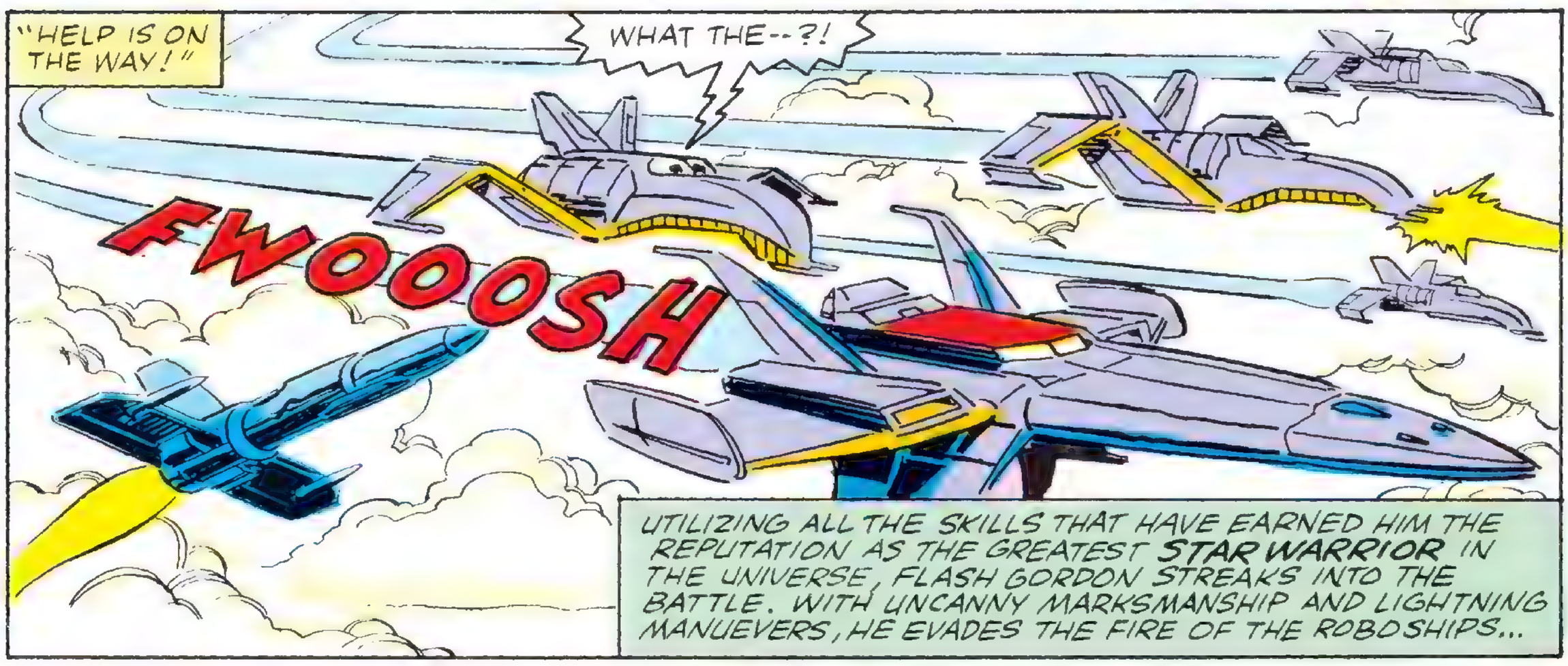

AND IT'LL BE GOOD TO SEE MORBIUS AGAIN-- THERE IS NOTHING IN THE WORLD LIKE AN OLD FRIEND...
FWOOOSH
NOT TO MENTION THE HELP THE CRYL WILL BE WITH MONITOR! LOOKS LIKE THINGS ARE STARTING TO SHAPE UP!

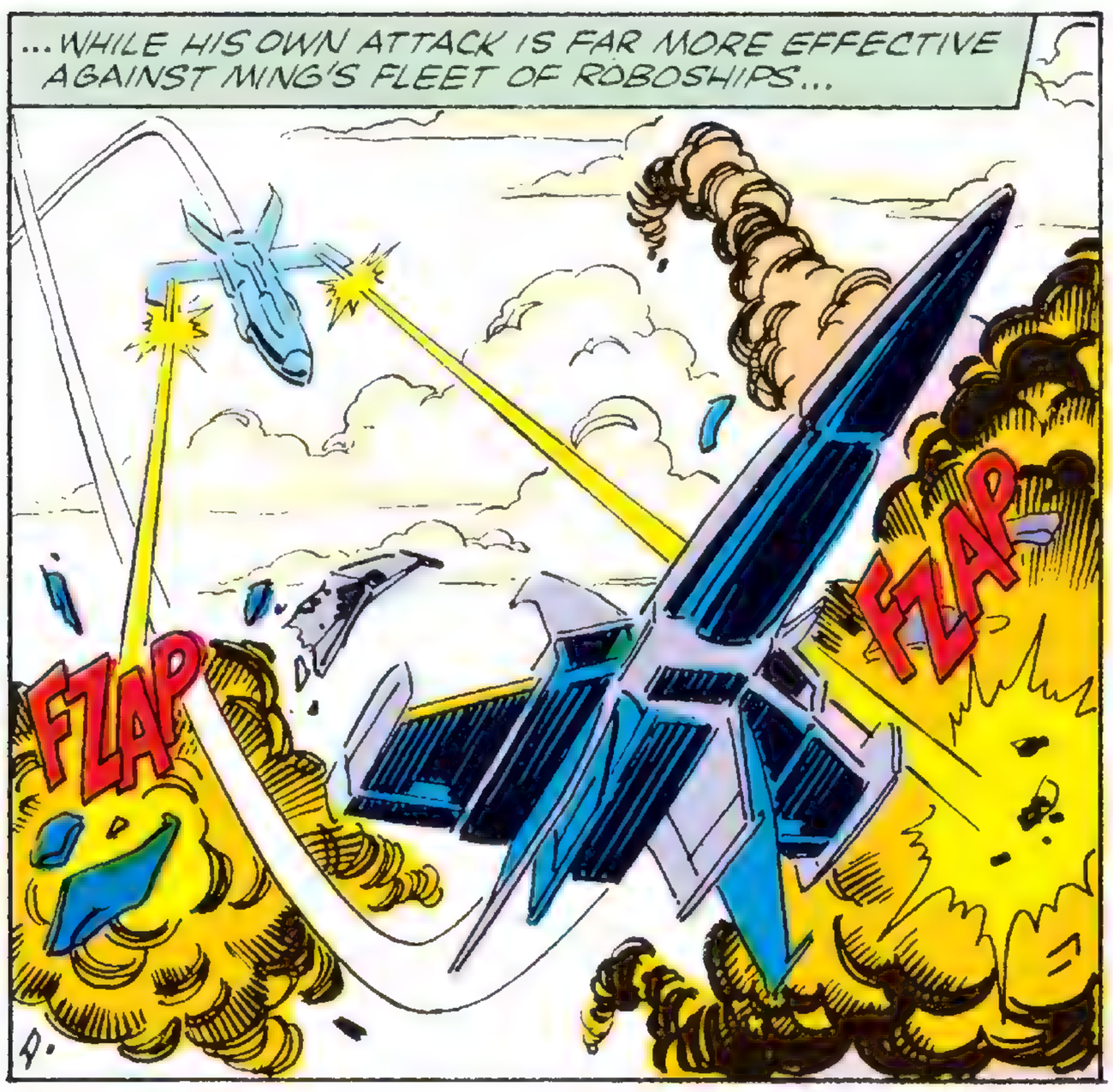

AND BACK IN MANDRAKE'S BALLROOM, WHERE THE REST OF THE DEFENDERS ARE GATHERED BEFORE DYNAK X'S SCREEN...
LOOK! THE CRYL ARE BEING ATTACKED!

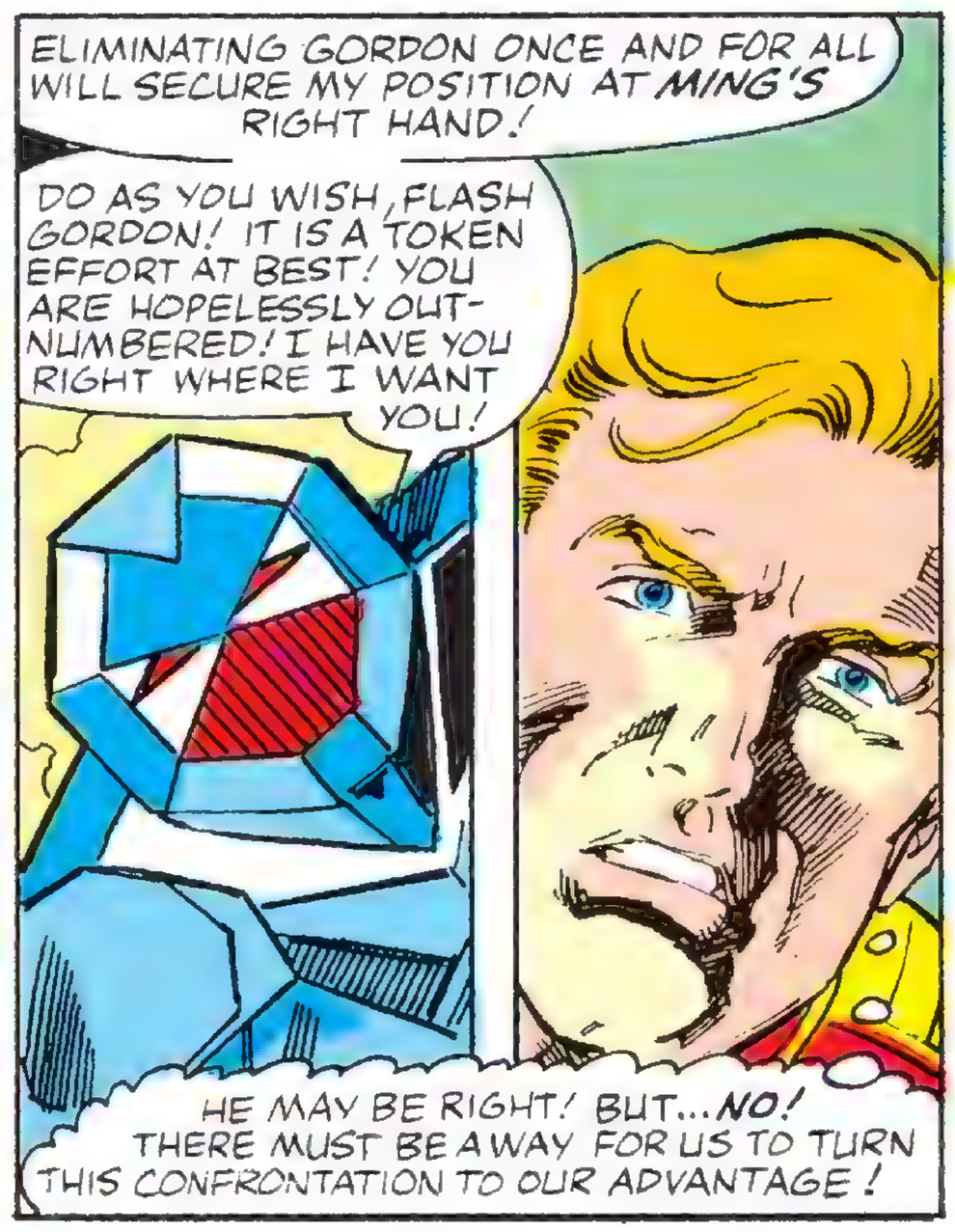
BUT WHO WOULD FIRE UPON--?
WHO ELSE? THOSE ARE MING'S ROBO-SHIPS!

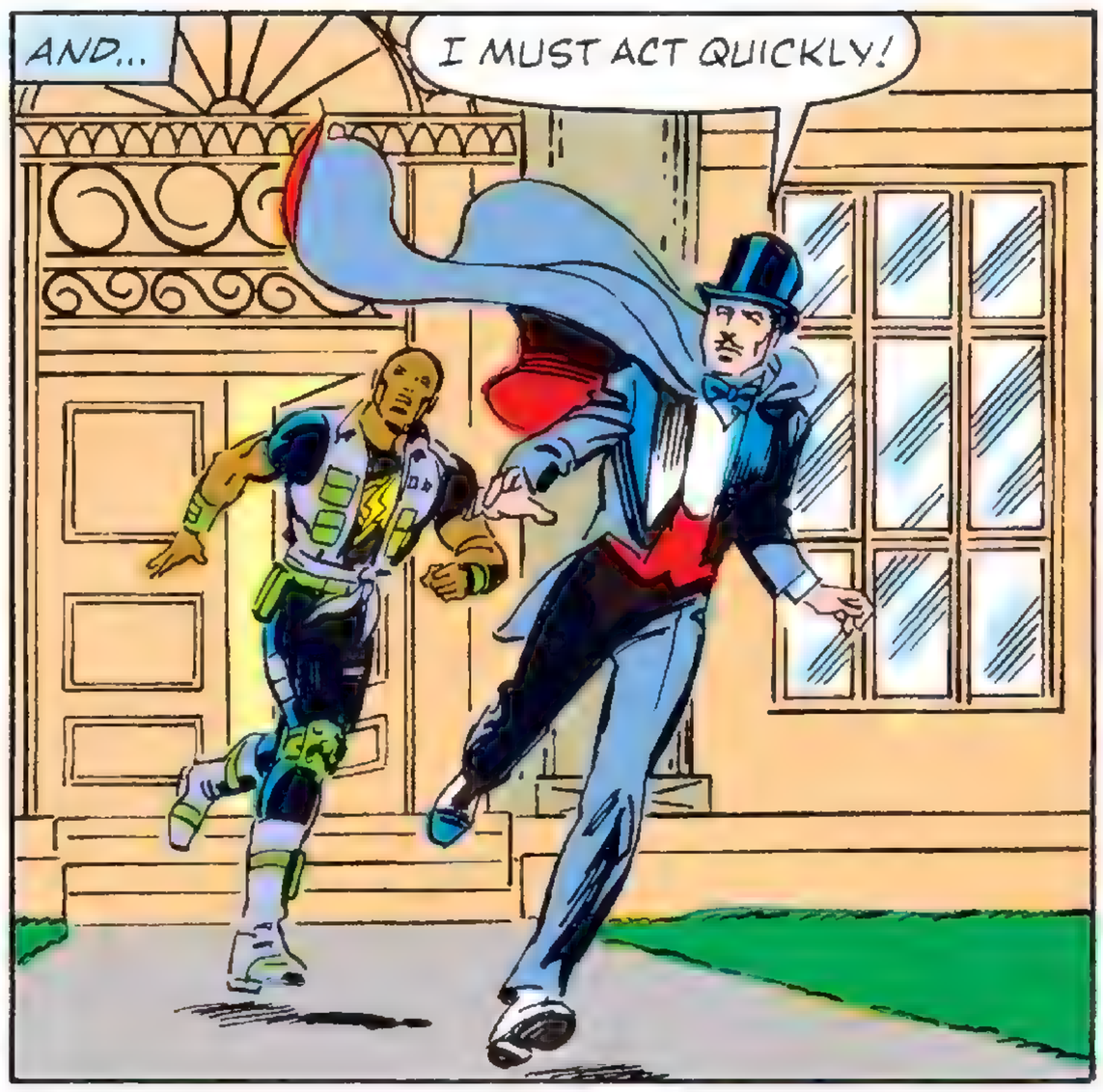

LUCKILY, THE CRYL WERE ON ALERT!


BUT, WILL EVEN THEIR EXPERT ABILITIES BE ENOUGH TO ENABLE THEM TO WITHSTAND SUCH OVERWHELMING ODDS?
THEY CAN'T GIVE UP HOPE!


"HELP IS ON THE WAY!"
WHAT THE--?!
FWOOOSH
UTILIZING ALL THE SKILLS THAT HAVE EARNED HIM THE REPUTATION AS THE GREATEST STAR WARRIOR IN THE UNIVERSE, FLASH GORDON STREAKS INTO THE BATTLE. WITH UNCANNY MARKSMANSHIP AND LIGHTNING MANUEVERS, HE EVADES THE FIRE OF THE ROBOSHIPS...


...WHILE HIS OWN ATTACK IS FAR MORE EFFECTIVE AGAINST MING'S FLEET OF ROBOSHIPS...
FZAP
FZAP


ELIMINATING GORDON ONCE AND FOR ALL WILL SECURE MY POSITION AT MING'S RIGHT HAND!
DO AS YOU WISH, FLASH GORDON! IT IS A TOKEN EFFORT AT BEST! YOU ARE HOPELESSLY OUT-NUMBERED! I HAVE YOU RIGHT WHERE I WANT YOU!
HE MAY BE RIGHT! BUT...NO! THERE MUST BE A WAY FOR US TO TURN THIS CONFRONTATION TO OUR ADVANTAGE!


AND...
I MUST ACT QUICKLY!

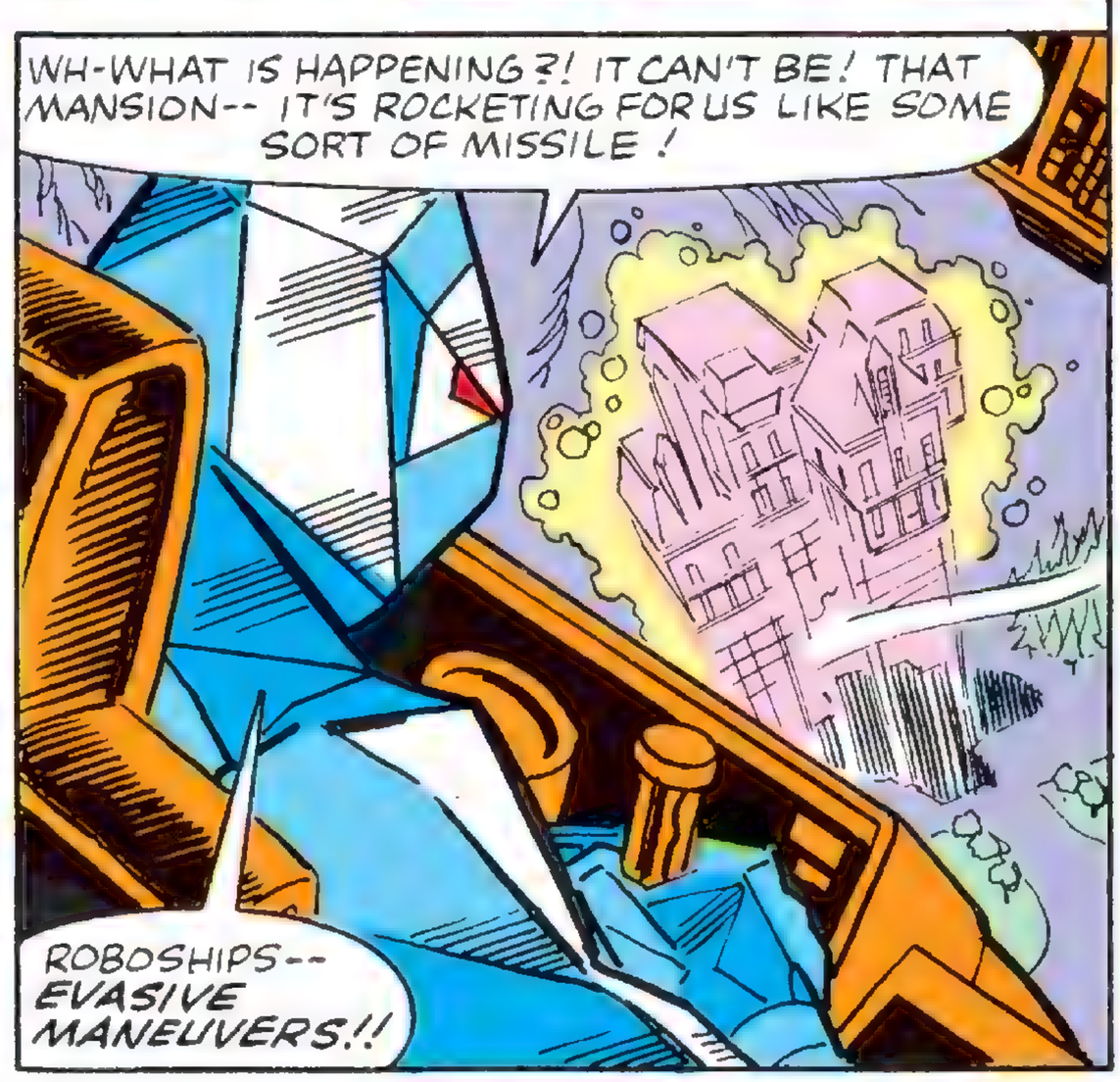
WE'RE NOT GONNA BE MUCH MORE THAN SITTING DUCKS ONCE THOSE SHIPS GET HERE!

EXACTLY! NOW QUIET DOWN, MY FRIEND. YOU KNOW I MUST CONCENTRATE TO USE MY POWERS OF ILLUSION!
MANDRAKE!

ENOUGH OF THIS--THE MOMENT IS CRUCIAL! THIS IS TOO SERIOUS A MATTER FOR YOU TO TREAT SO FRIVOLOUSLY.

CAN YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE, KSHIN? I AM SORRY, I DO NOT HAVE TIME FOR THIS NOW! PLEASE--FIND A PLACE WHERE YOU AND ZUFFY CAN STAY OUT OF TROUBLE!

NOW...

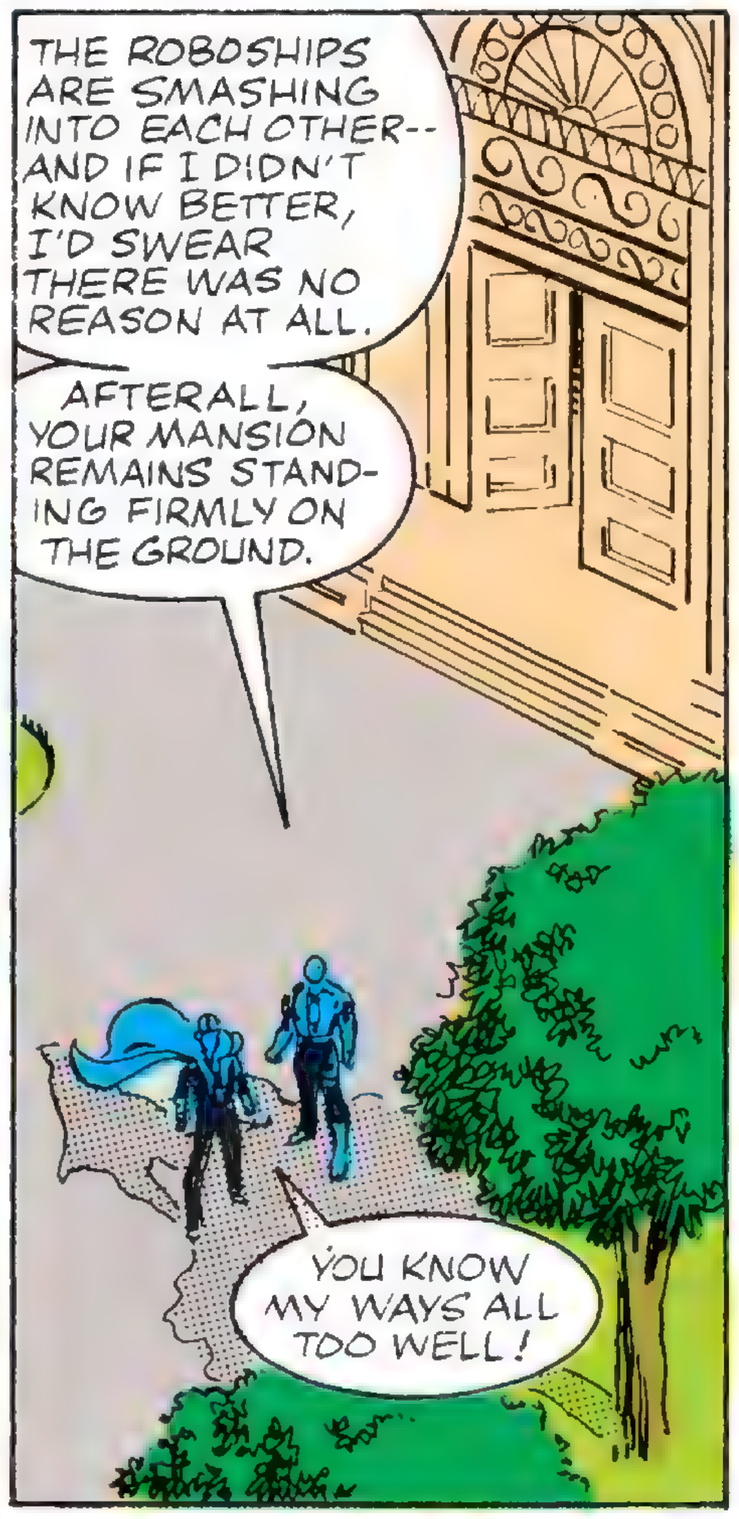

WH-WHAT IS HAPPENING?! IT CAN'T BE! THAT MANSION-- IT'S ROCKETING FOR US LIKE SOME SORT OF MISSILE!
ROBOSHIPS-- EVASIVE MANEUVERS!!

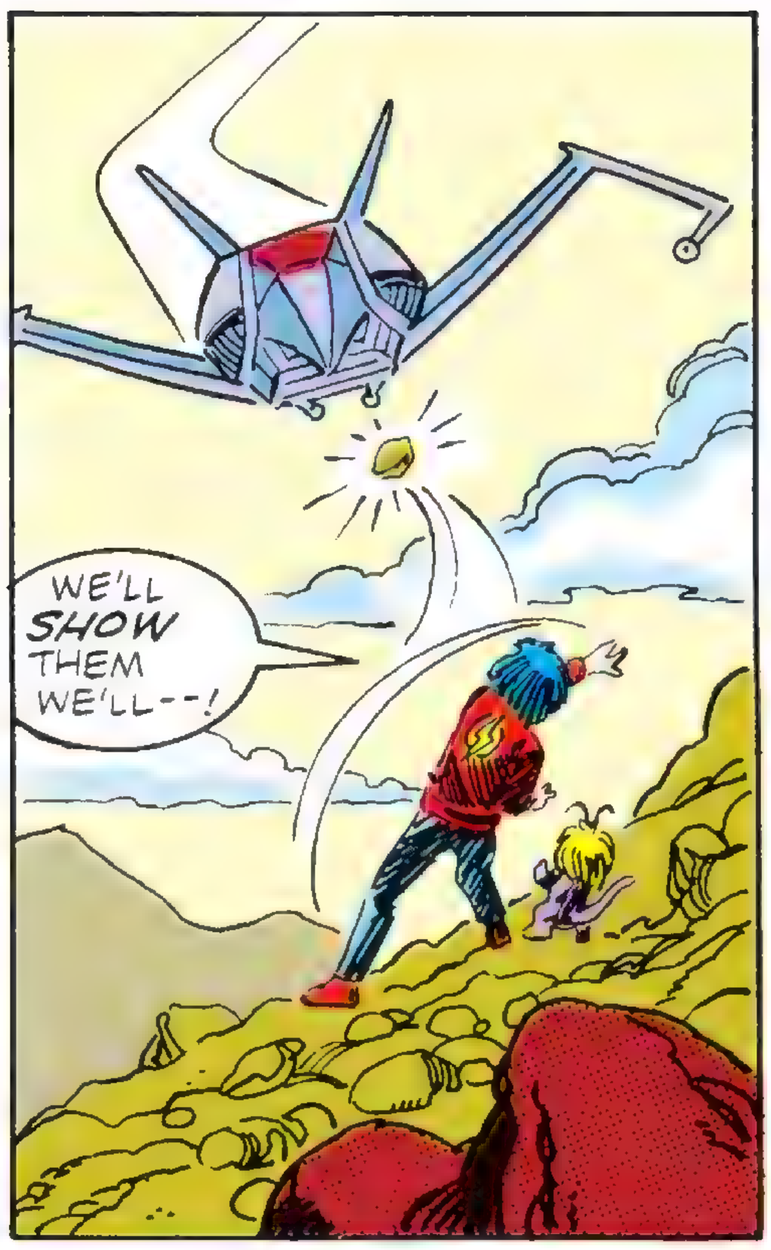
BUT, IN THEIR HASTE TO AVOID THE ENORMOUS PROJECTILE...

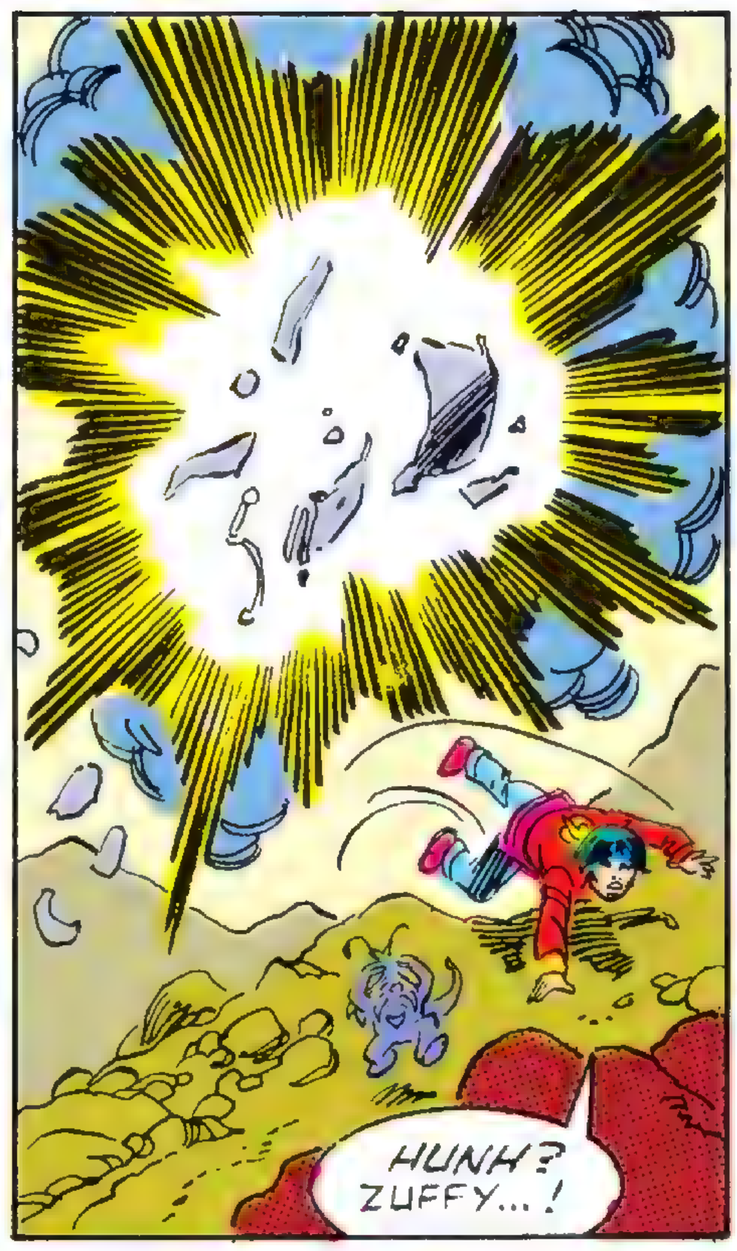
KBAM

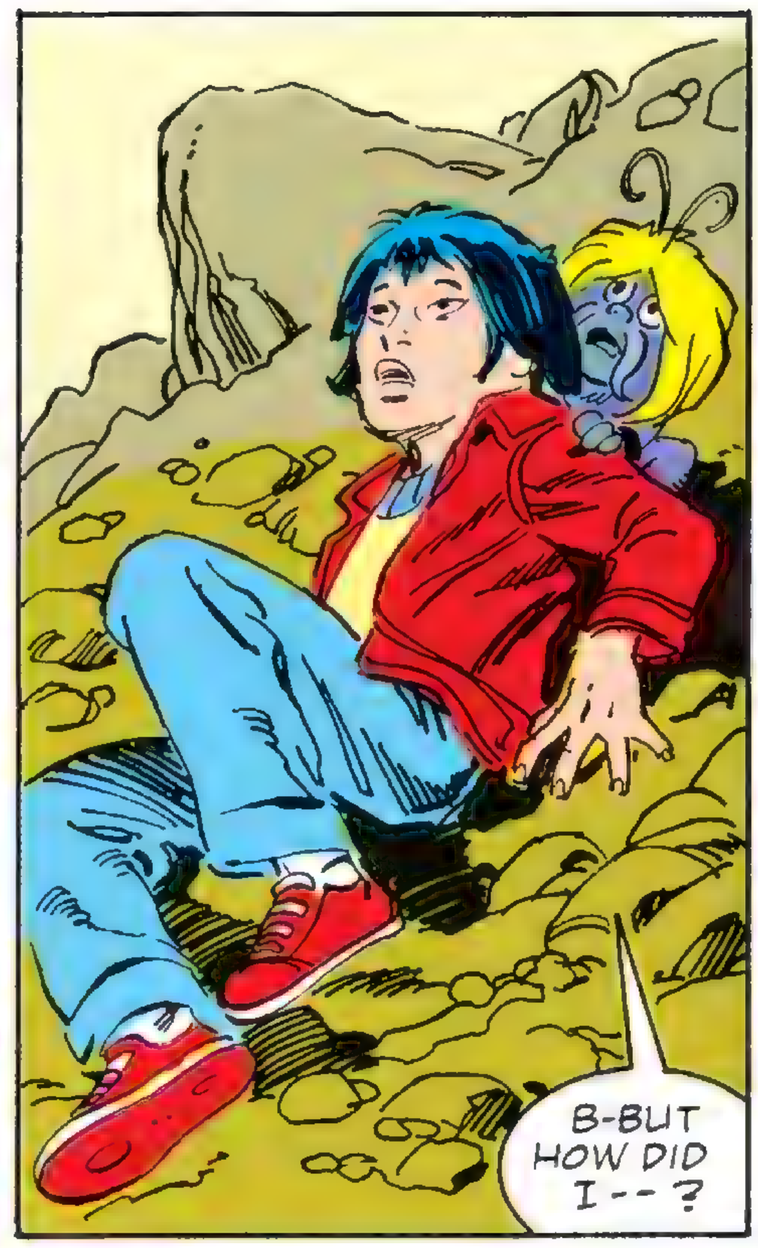
KPRAK

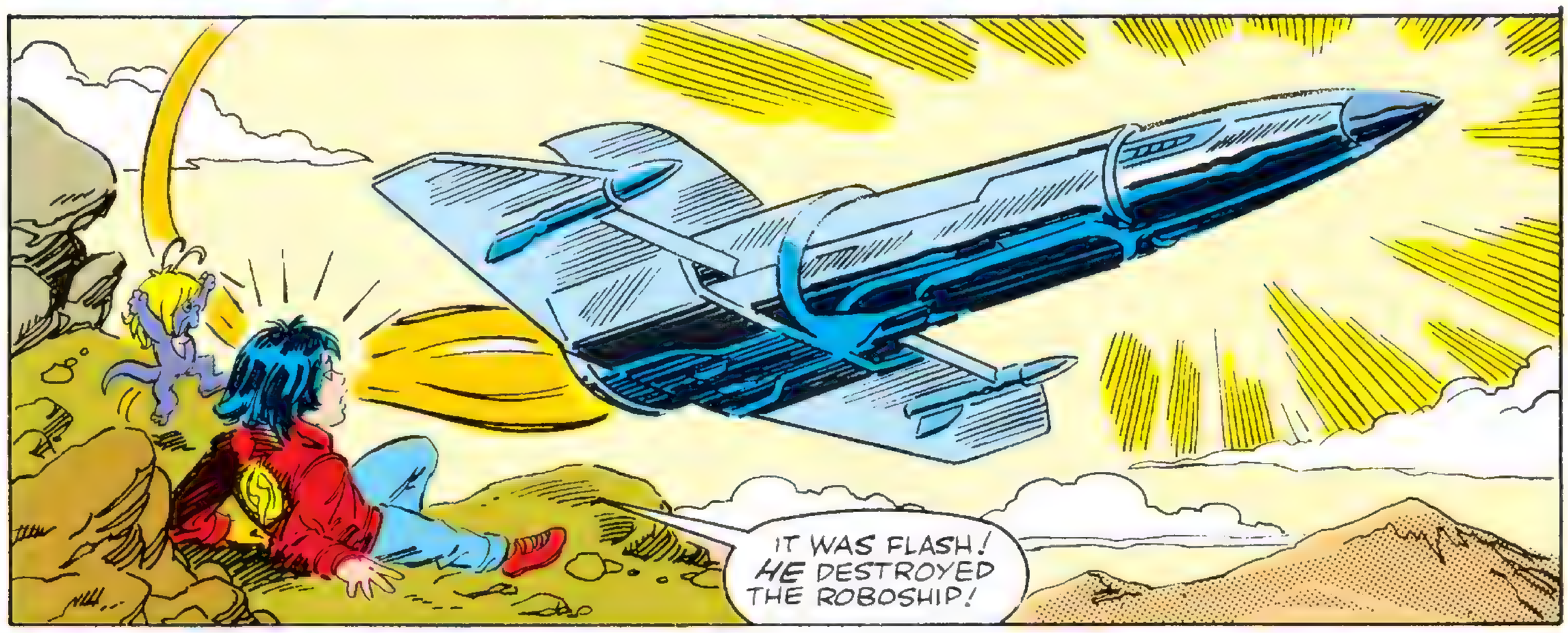
KSHOOM

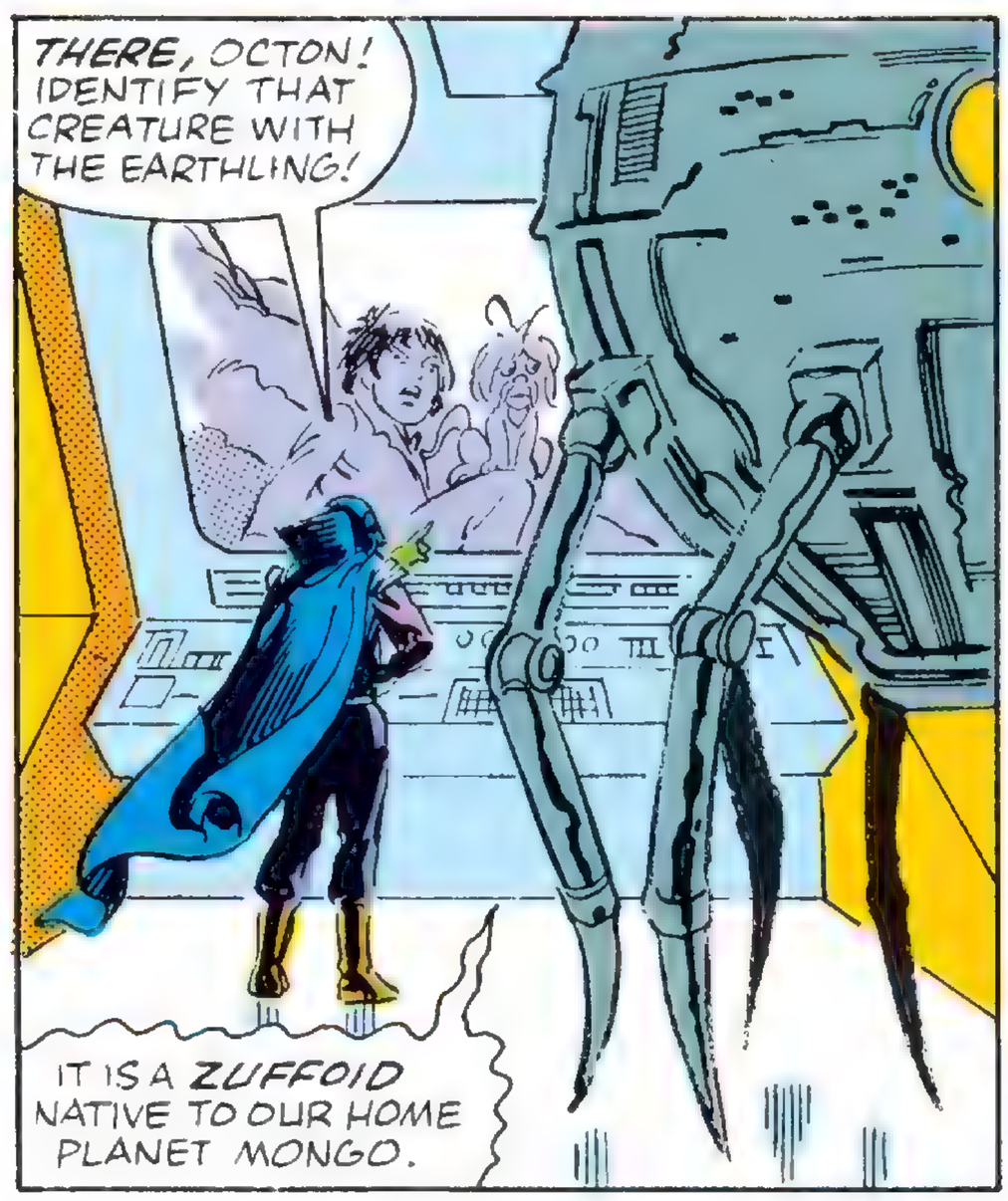



WE'LL SHOW THEM WE'LL--!

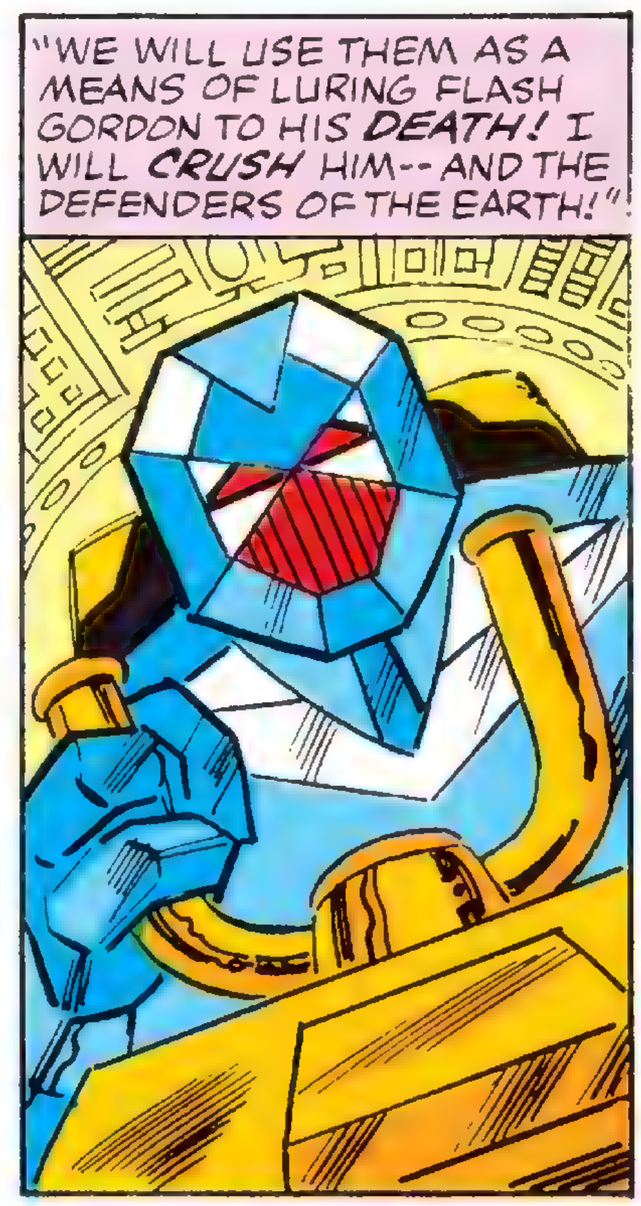

HUNH? ZUFFY...!


B-BUT HOW DID I--?

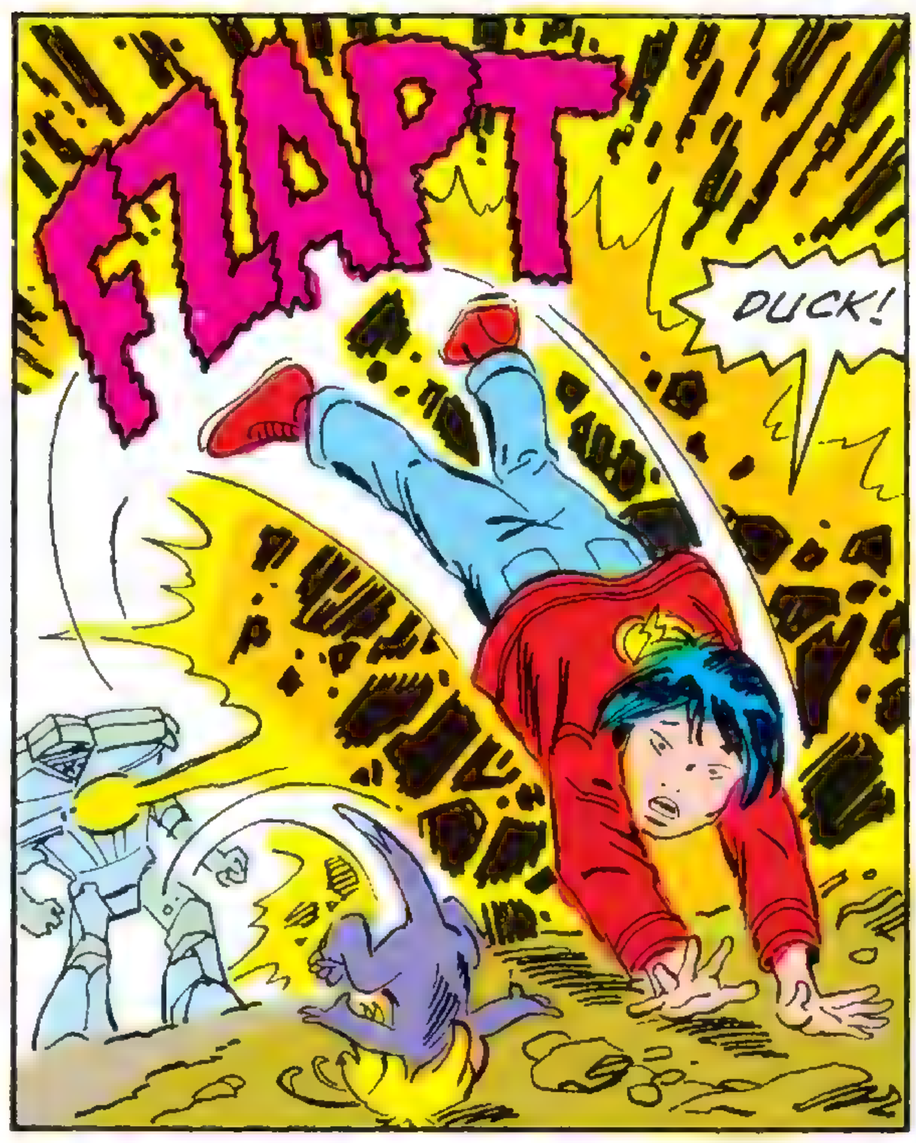

IT WAS FLASH! HE DESTROYED THE ROBOSHIP!

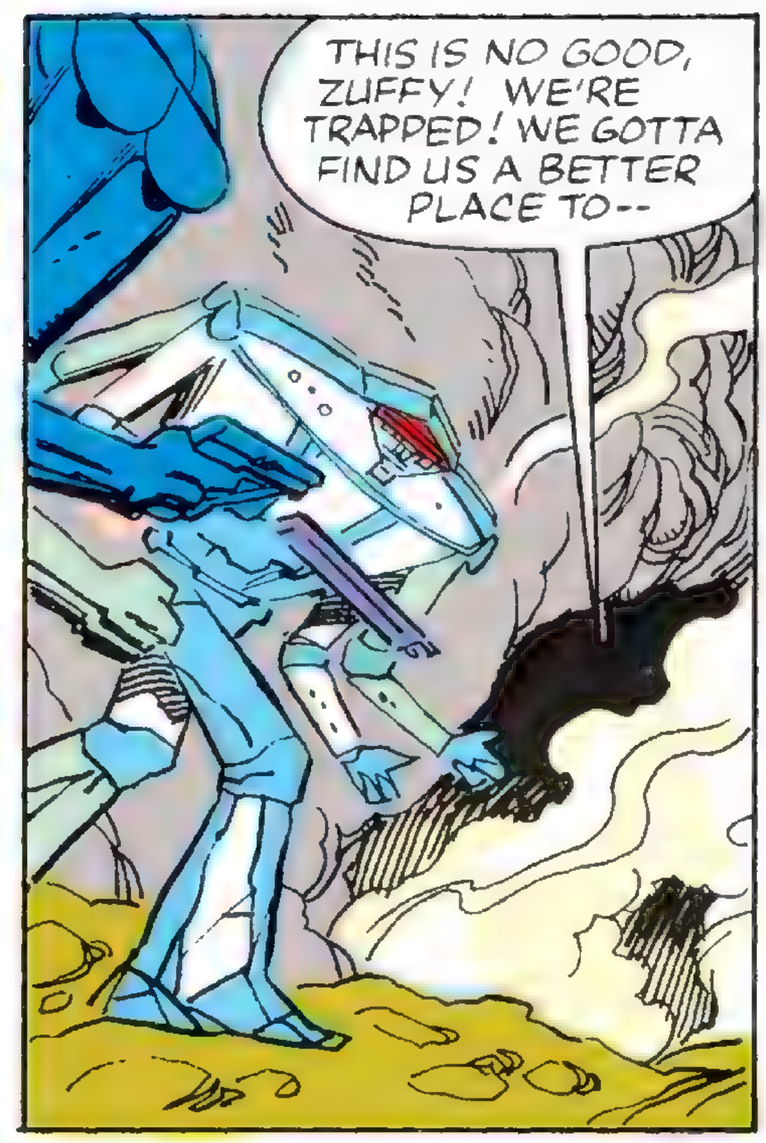

THERE, OCTON! IDENTIFY THAT CREATURE WITH THE EARTHLING!
IT IS A ZUFFOID NATIVE TO OUR HOME PLANET MONGO.

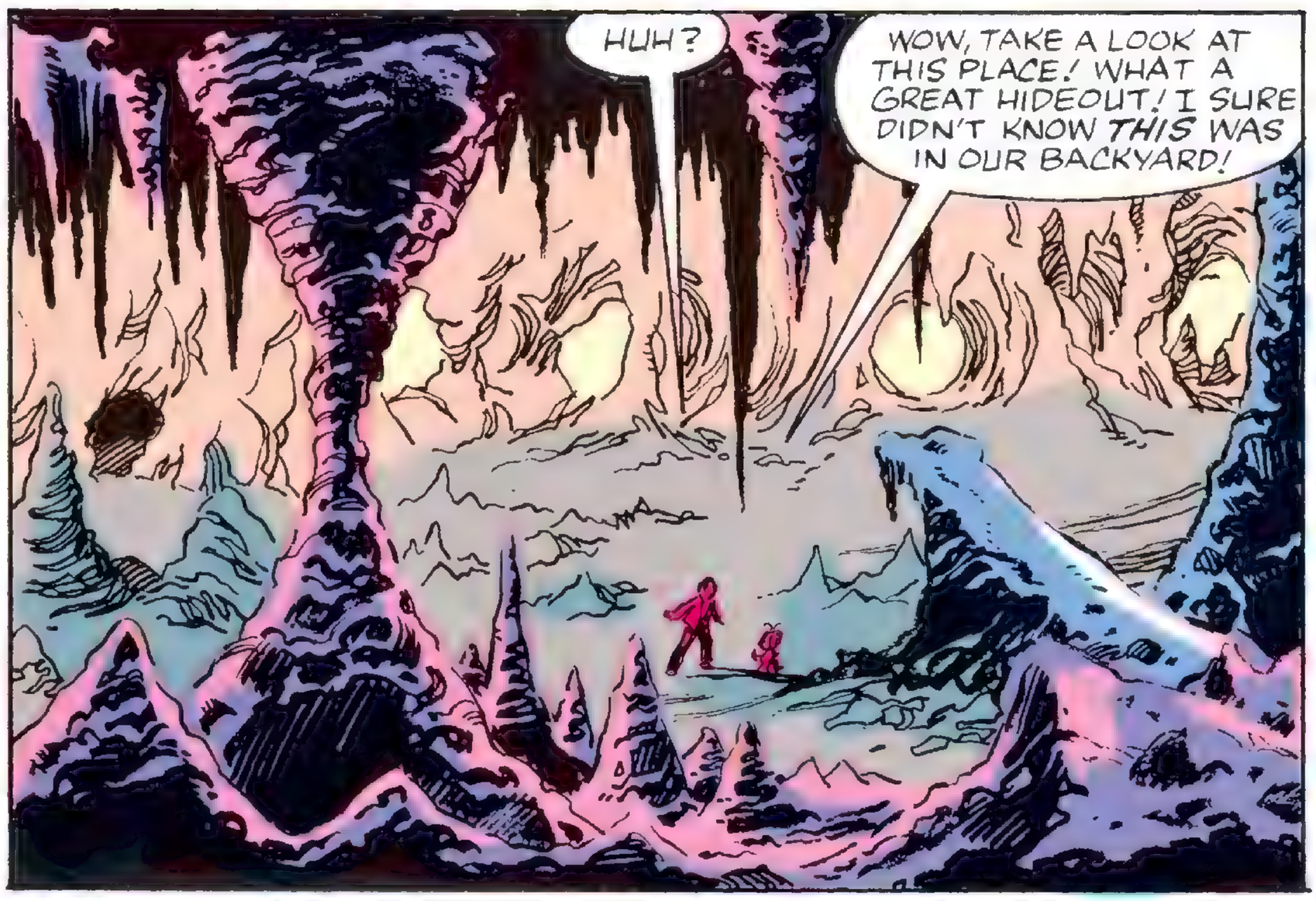
THEN THAT BOY MUST HAVE COME TO MONGO WITH FLASH GORDON!!
HE MUST BE CAPTURED!
HAVE GARAX ORDER THE ICE ROBOTS TO BRING THAT BOY AND HIS INSUFFERABLE ZUFFOID TO ME--ALIVE!

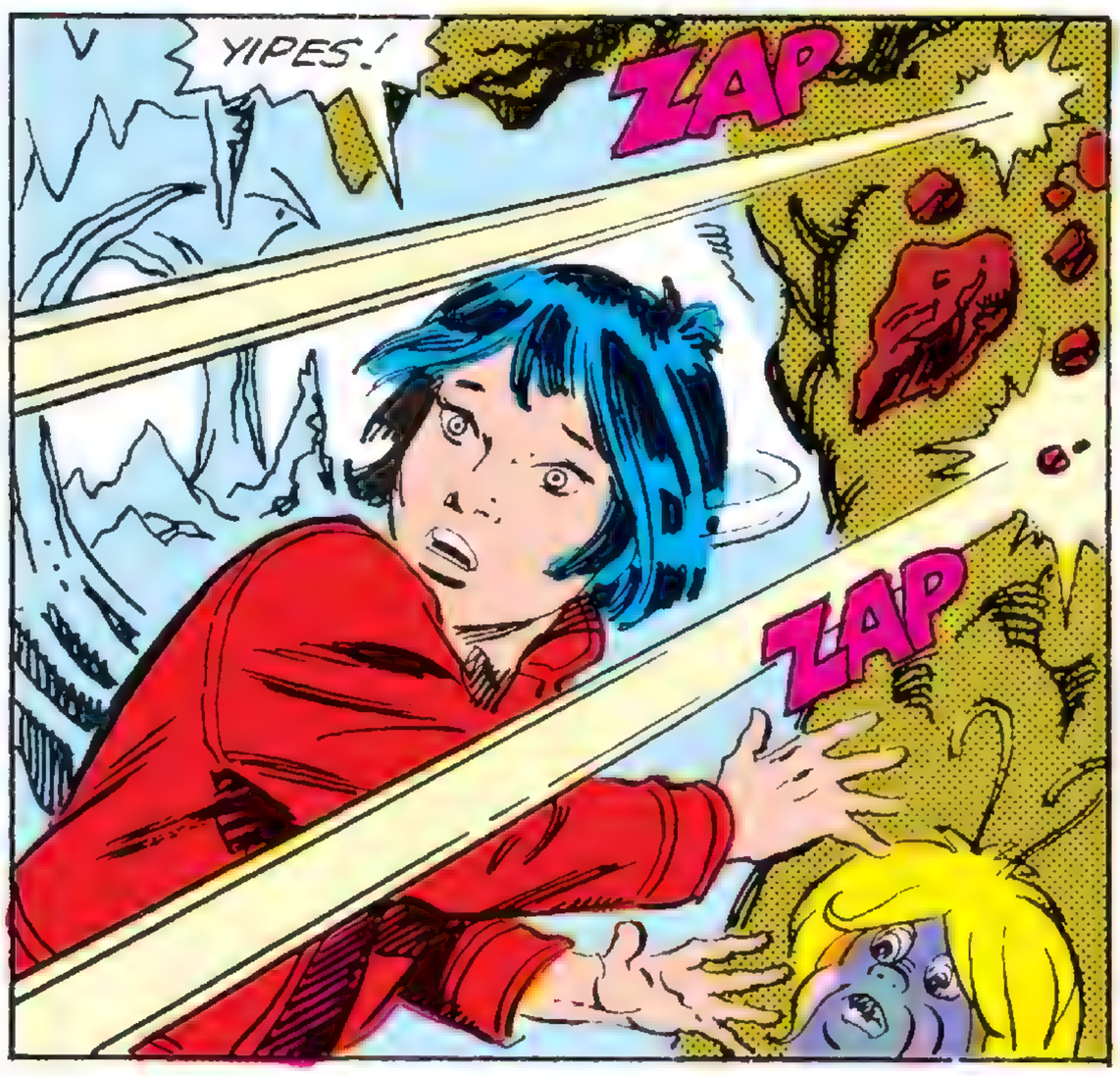

"WE WILL USE THEM AS A MEANS OF LURING FLASH GORDON TO HIS DEATH! I WILL CRUSH HIM--AND THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH!"

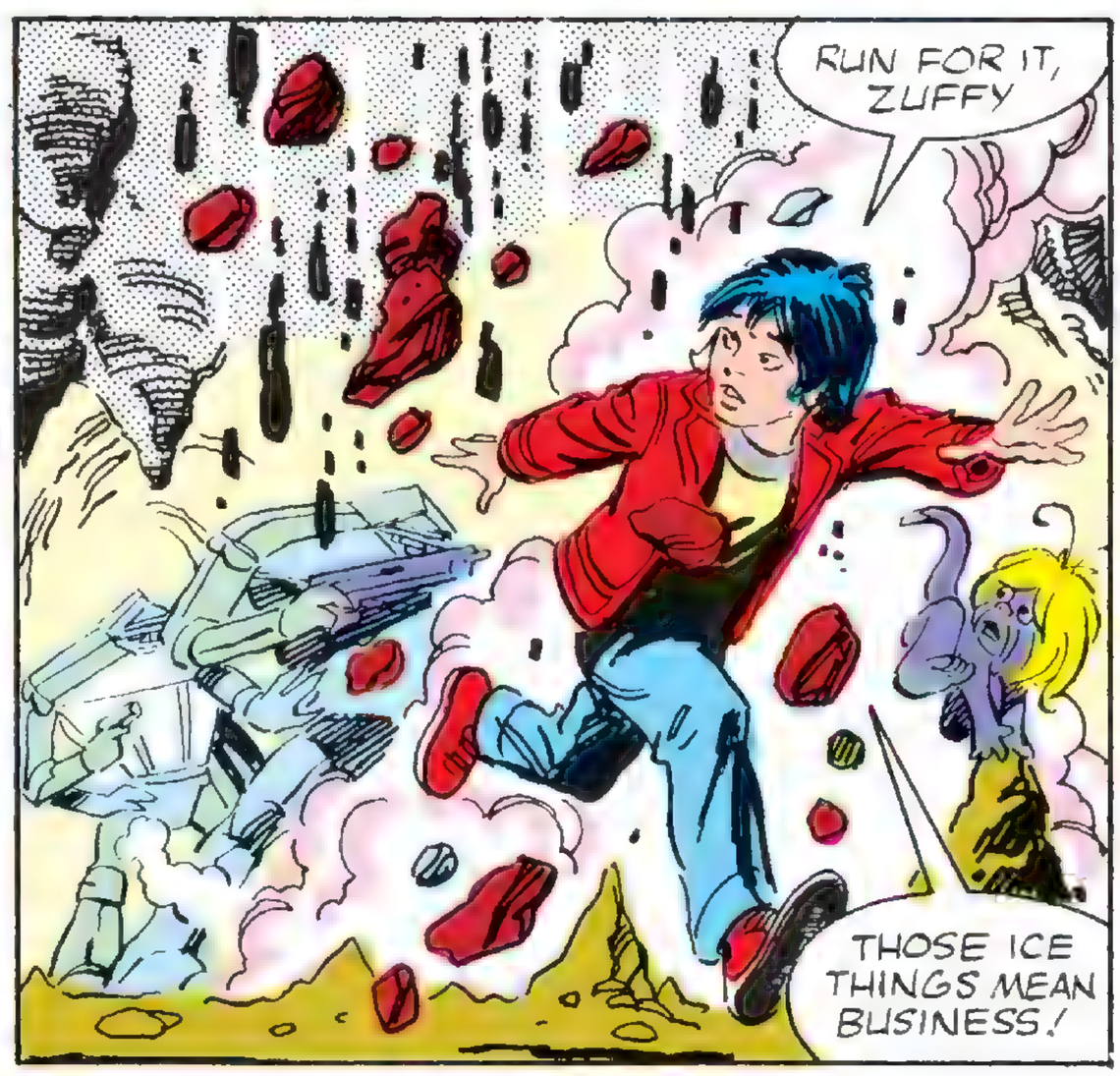
AND SO...
UH-OH!
WE'RE IN TROUBLE NOW!


FZAPT
DUCK!


THIS IS NO GOOD, ZUFFY! WE'RE TRAPPED! WE GOTTA FIND US A BETTER PLACE TO--

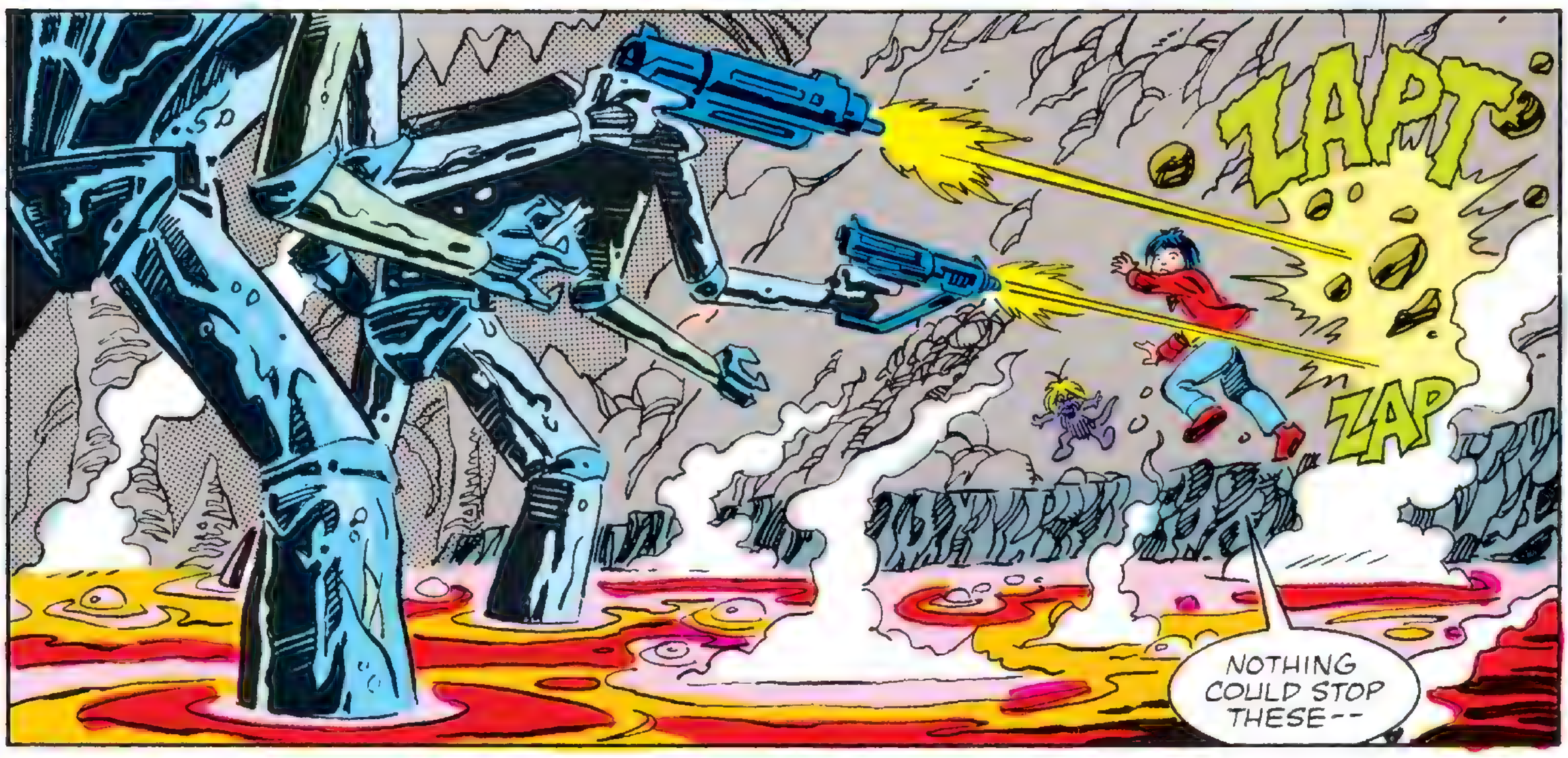

HUH?
WOW, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS PLACE! WHAT A GREAT HIDEOUT! I SURE DIDN'T KNOW THIS WAS IN OUR BACKYARD!

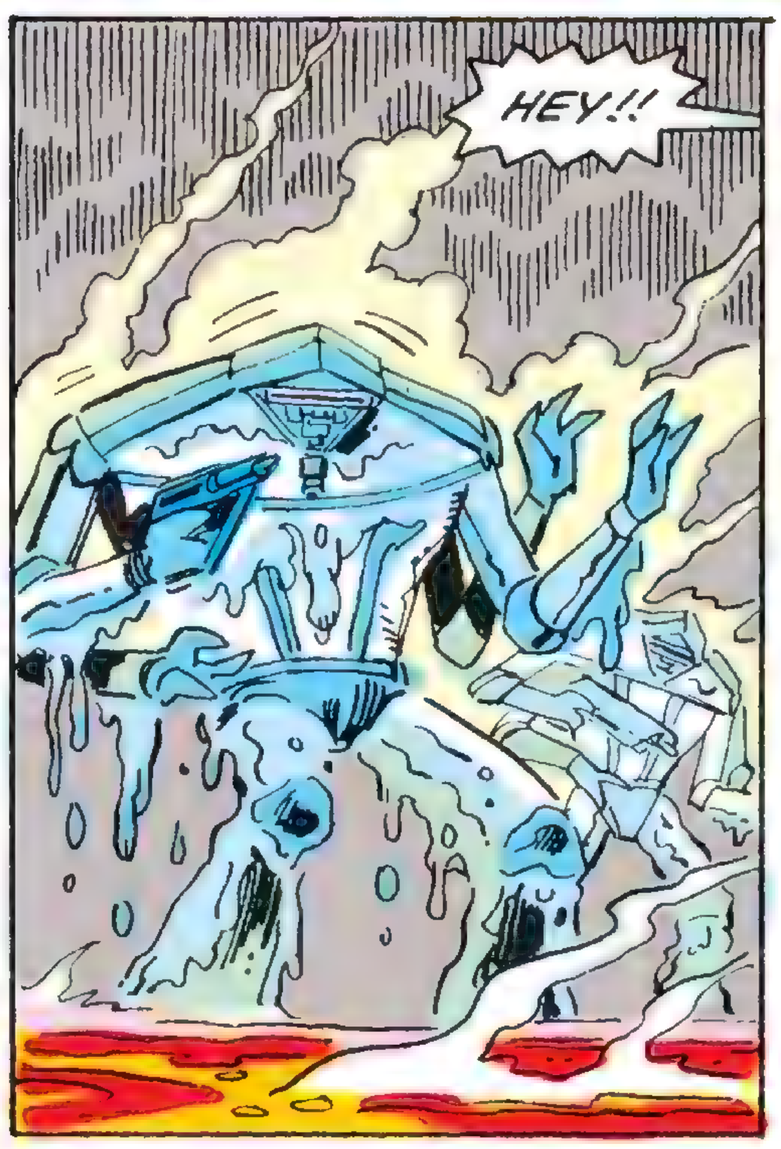

YIPES!
ZAP
ZAP


RUN FOR IT, ZUFFY
THOSE ICE THINGS MEAN BUSINESS!

ZAP
BUT WHAT ARE WE GONNA--
ZATZ

DOOOOOOOOOPS!


ZAPT
ZAP
NOTHING COULD STOP THESE--


HEY!!

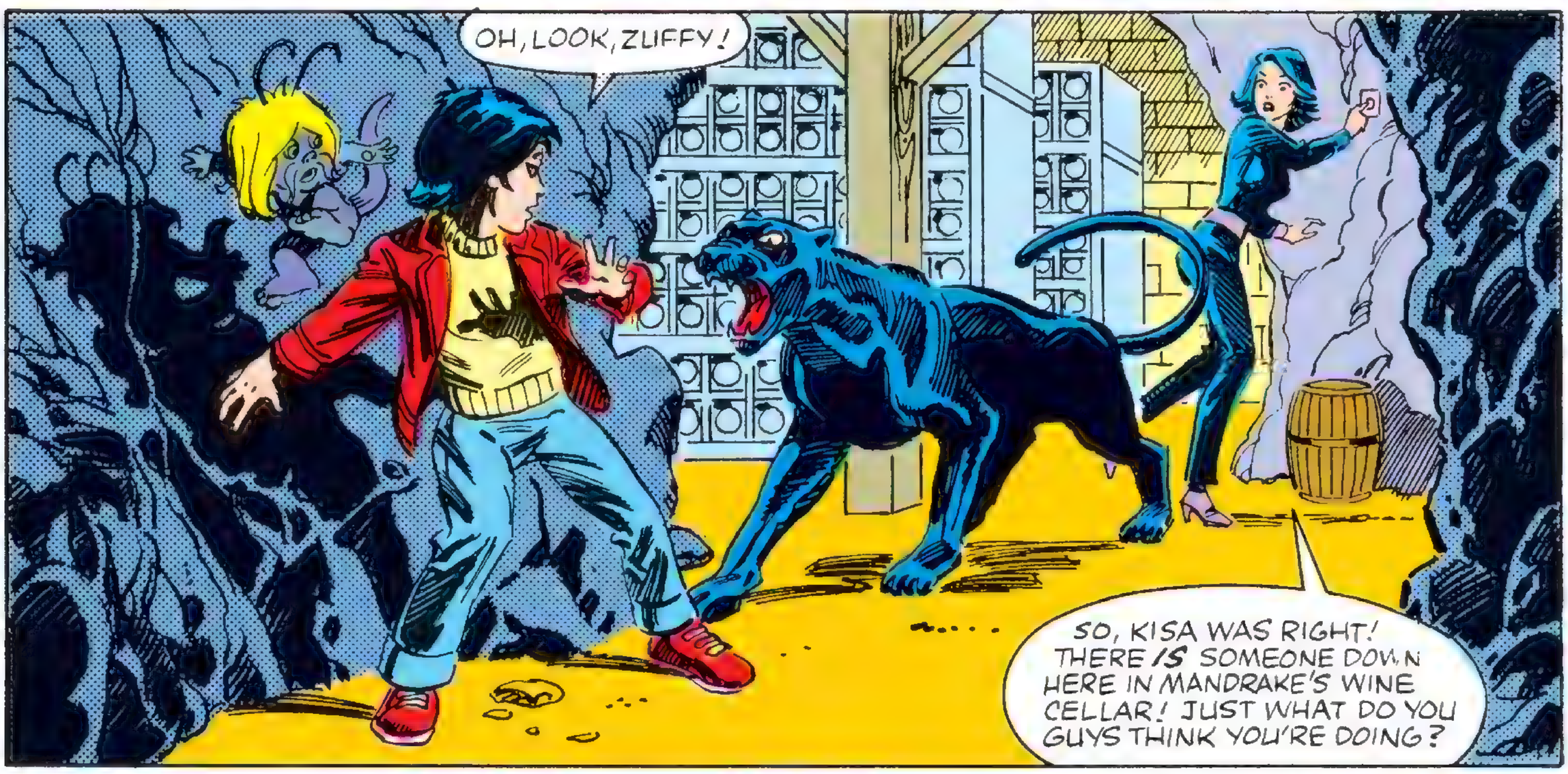
THEY'RE MELTING!
THE ICE ROBOTS ARE MELTING!

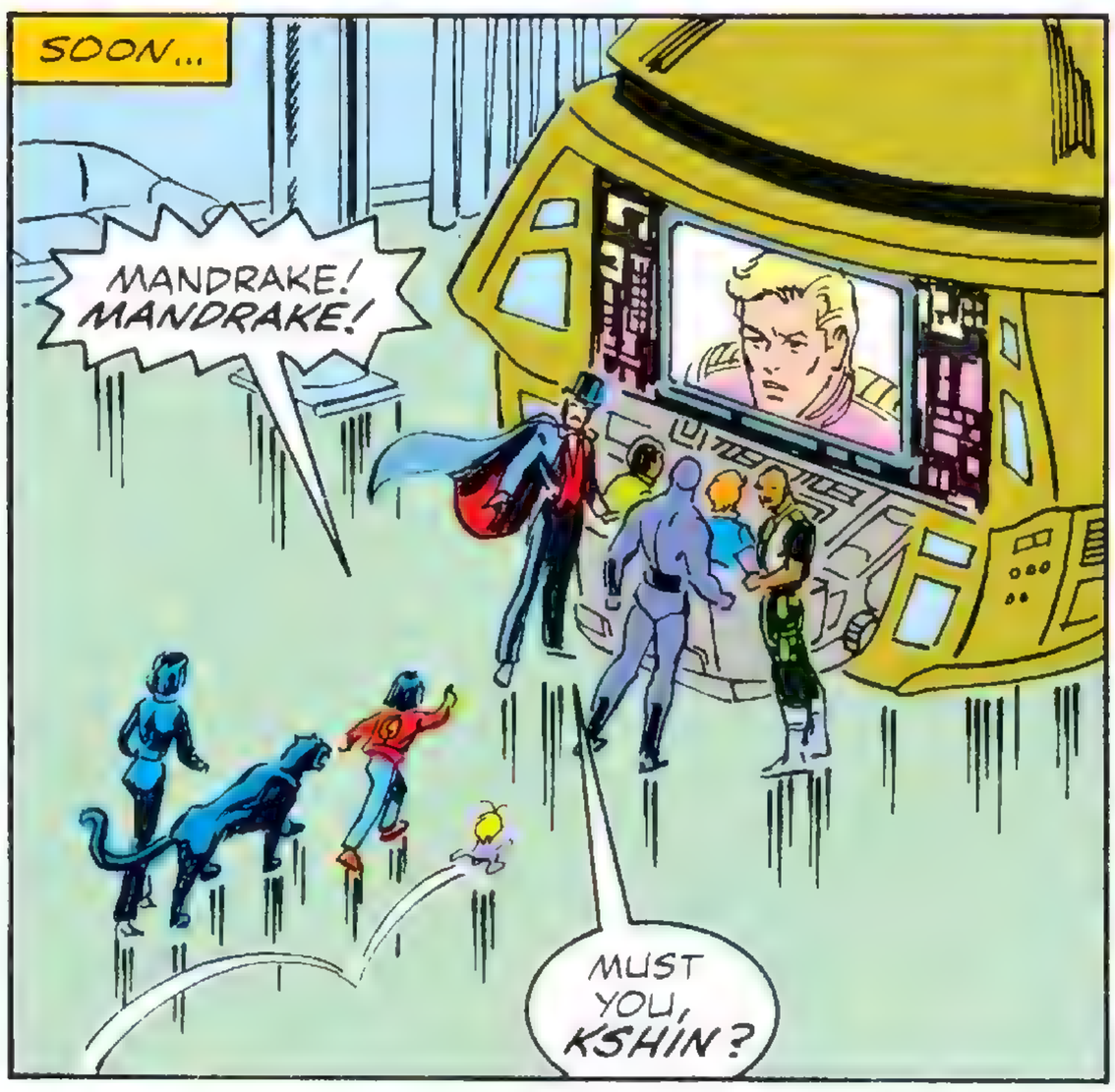
AWRIGHT!! JUST...

...GREAT...?

WH-WHERE ARE WE NOW? MAYBE WE SHOULD GO BACK THE OTHER WAY.

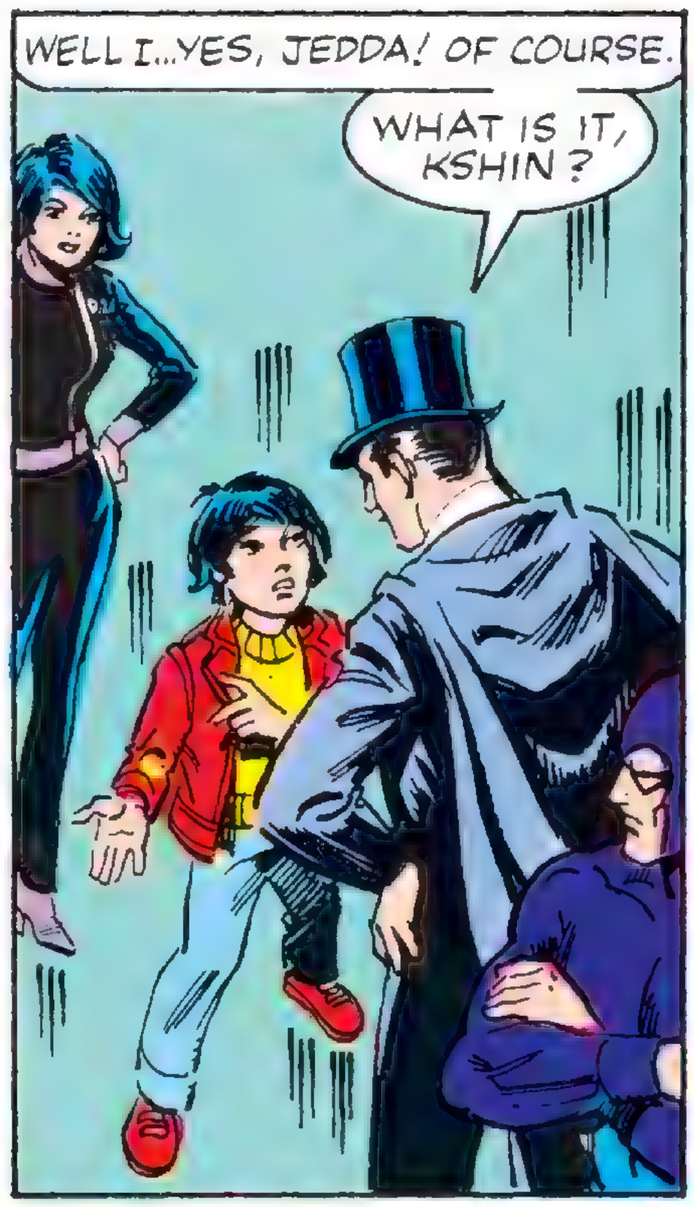
GRRRRRR
OH!


OH, LOOK, ZIFFY!
SO, KISA WAS RIGHT! THERE IS SOMEONE DOWN HERE IN MANDRAKE'S WINE CELLAR! JUST WHAT DO YOU GUYS THINK YOU'RE DOING?

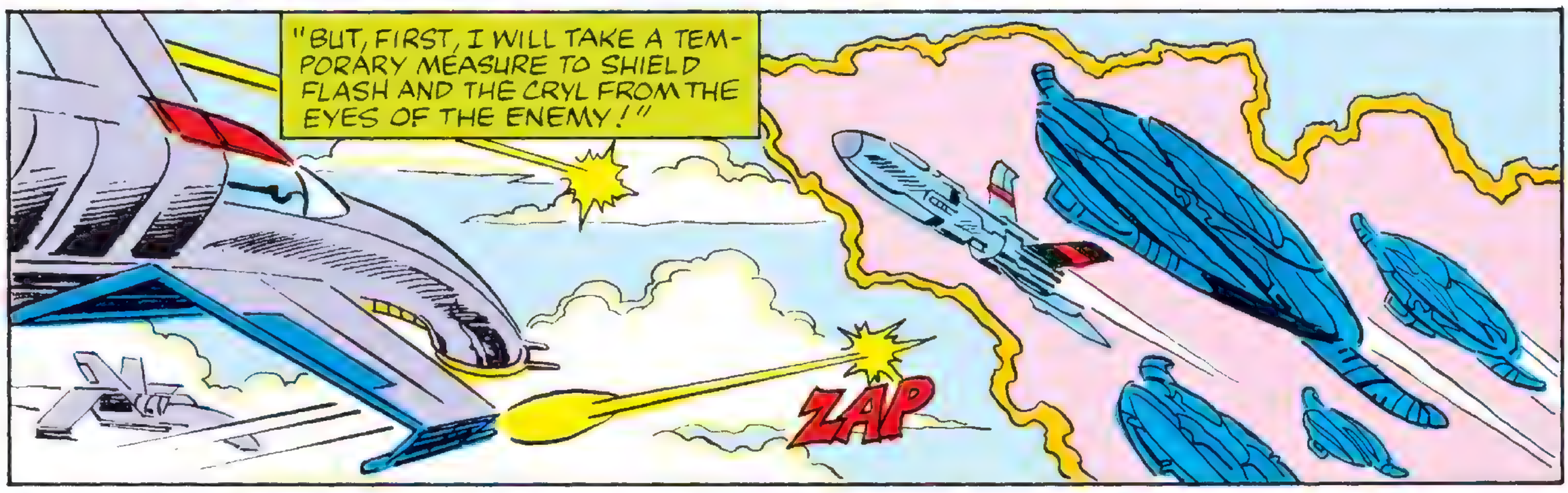

SOON...
MANDRAKE! MANDRAKE!
MUST YOU, KSHIN?

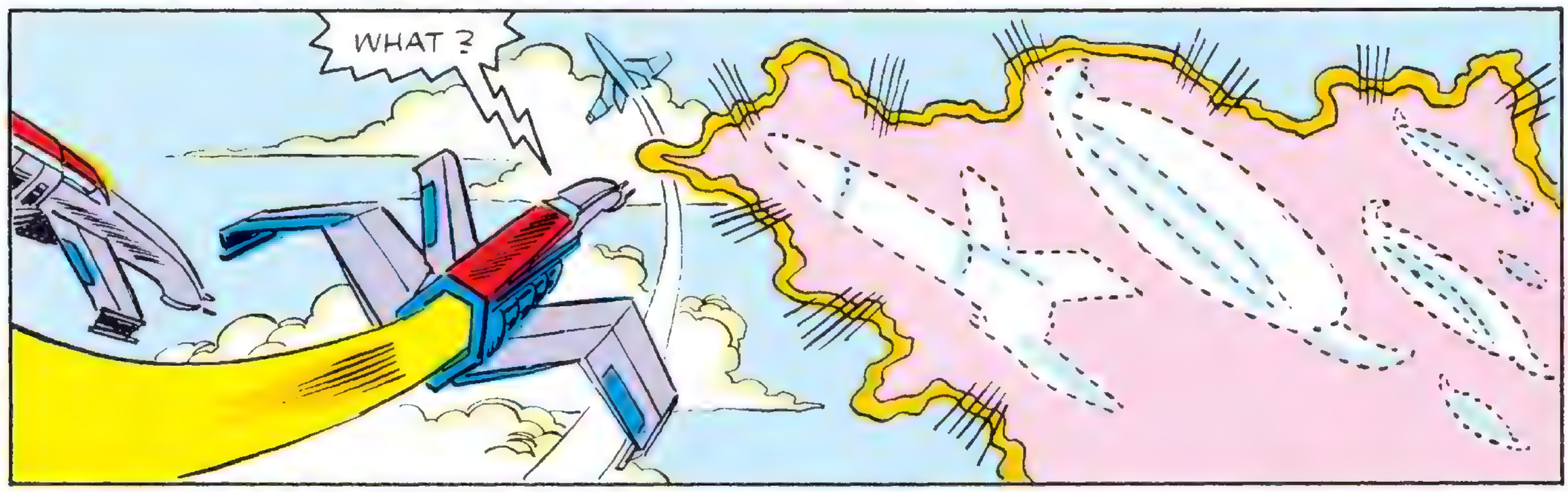
DIDN'T I TELL YOU TO STAY OUT OF OUR WAY? WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE IS IMPORTANT!
HEY!

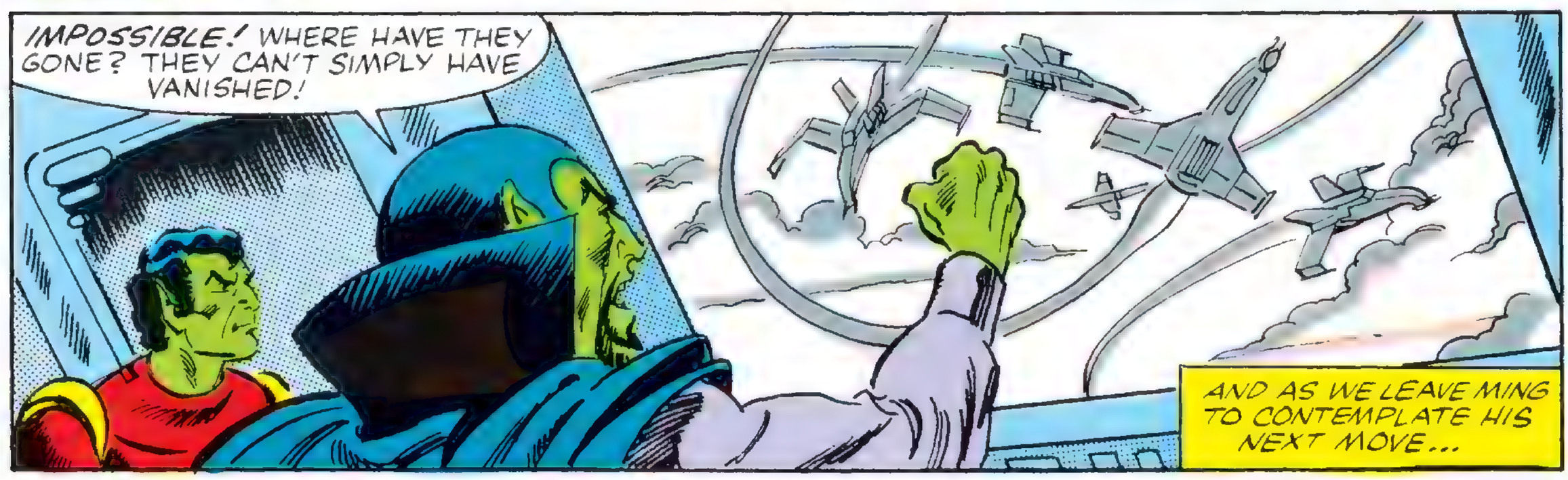
NOW SEE HERE, MR. HIGH AND MIGHTY! WHAT KSHIN HAS TO SAY IS IMPORTANT, TOO! IF YOU DIDN'T JUST BRUSH HIM OFF ALL THE TIME YOU JUST MIGHT LEARN A THING OR TWO!

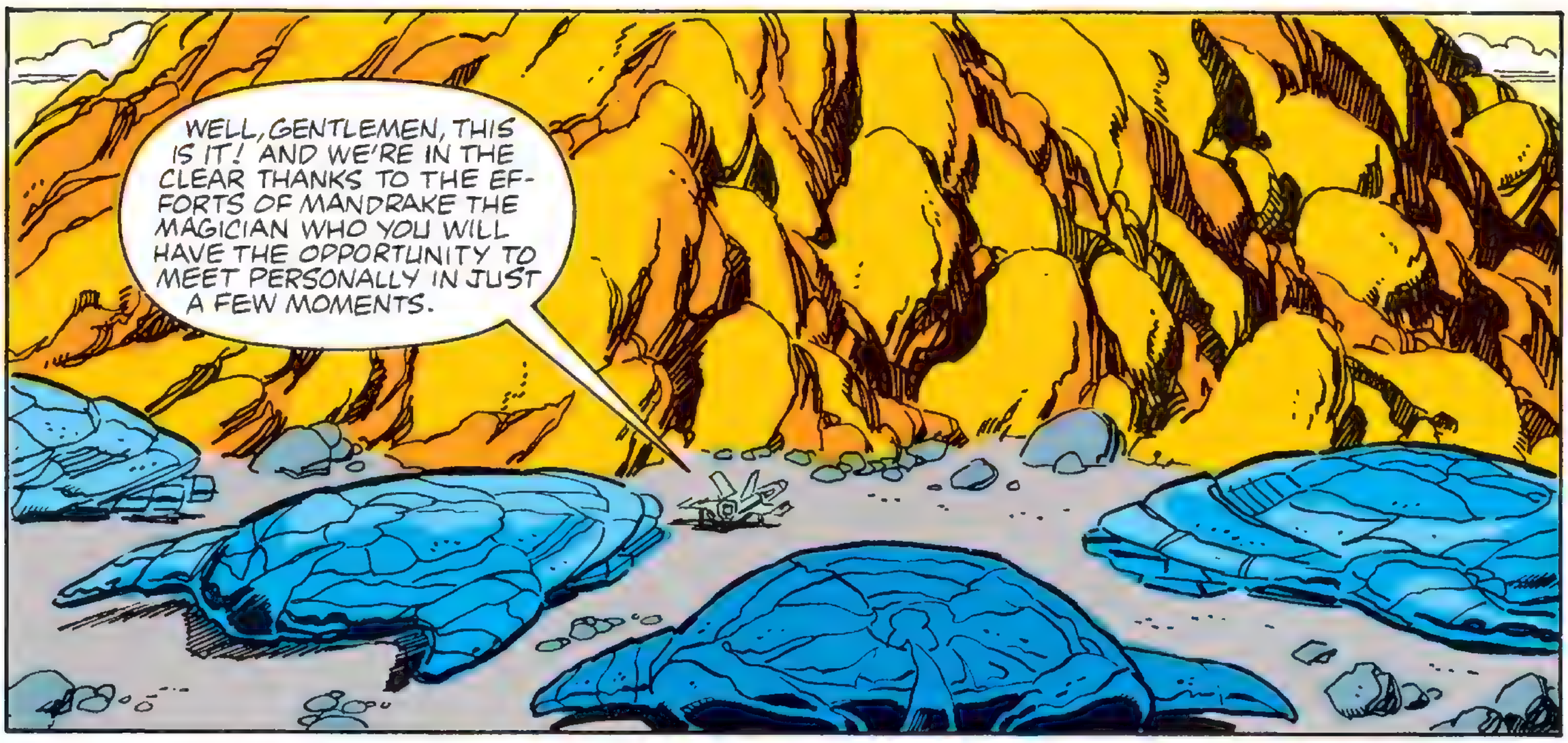

WELL I...YES, JEDDA! OF COURSE.
WHAT IS IT, KSHIN?

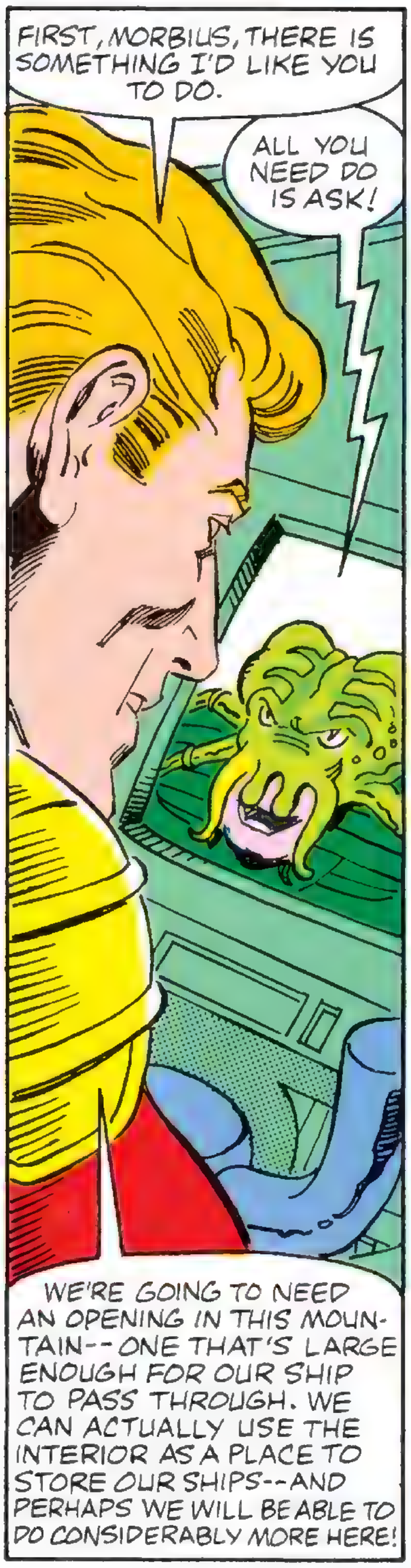
AND, SO...
I AM SORRY, KSHIN. FORGIVE ME. I THINK THE CAVERN YOU DISCOVERED MAY BE JUST THE THING WE NEED. IT SOUNDS AS IF WE CAN HIDE THE ENTIRE FLEET IN THERE... AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT WE SHALL DO!

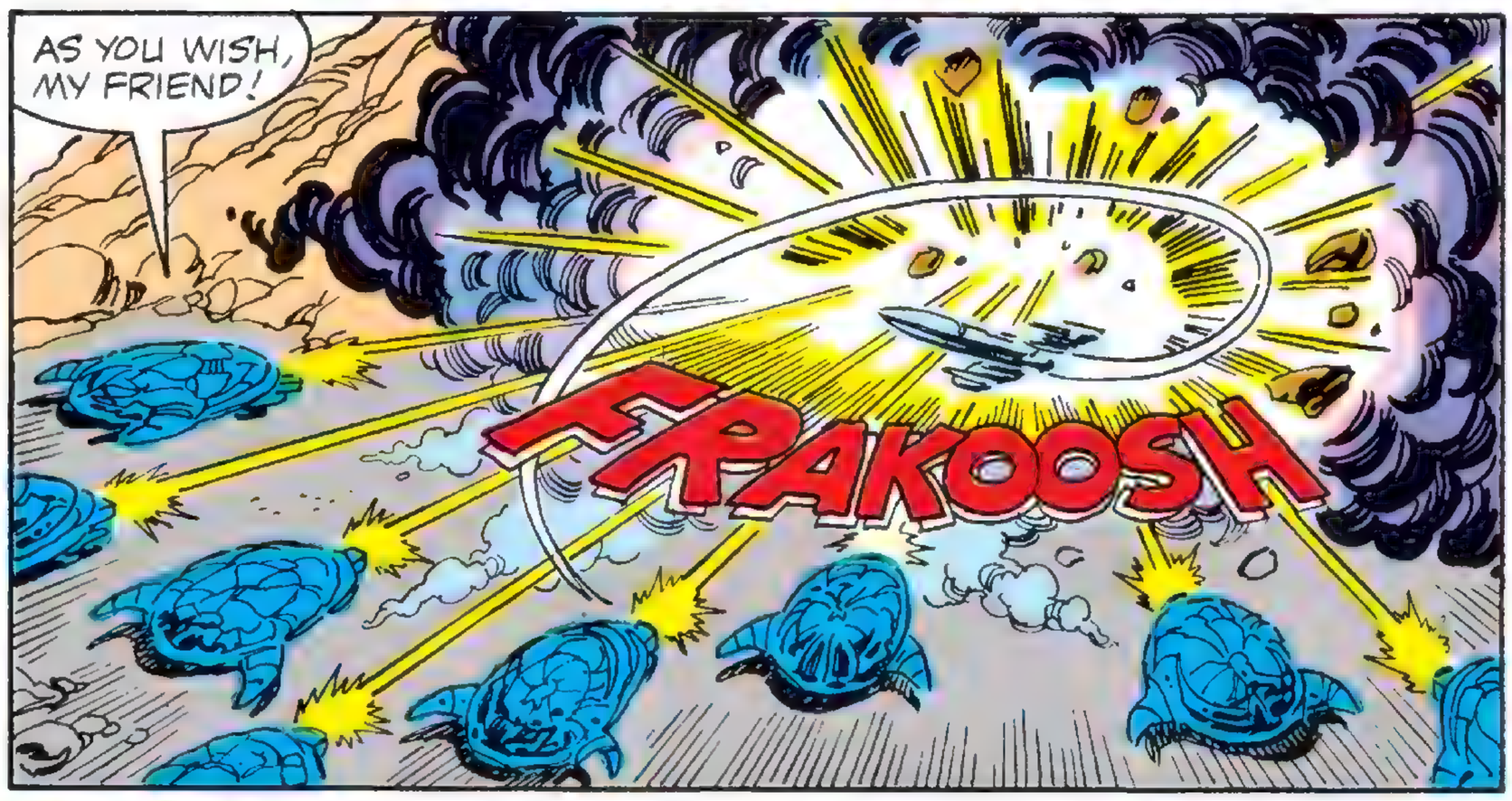

"BUT, FIRST, I WILL TAKE A TEMPORARY MEASURE TO SHIELD FLASH AND THE CRYL FROM THE EYES OF THE ENEMY!"
ZAP

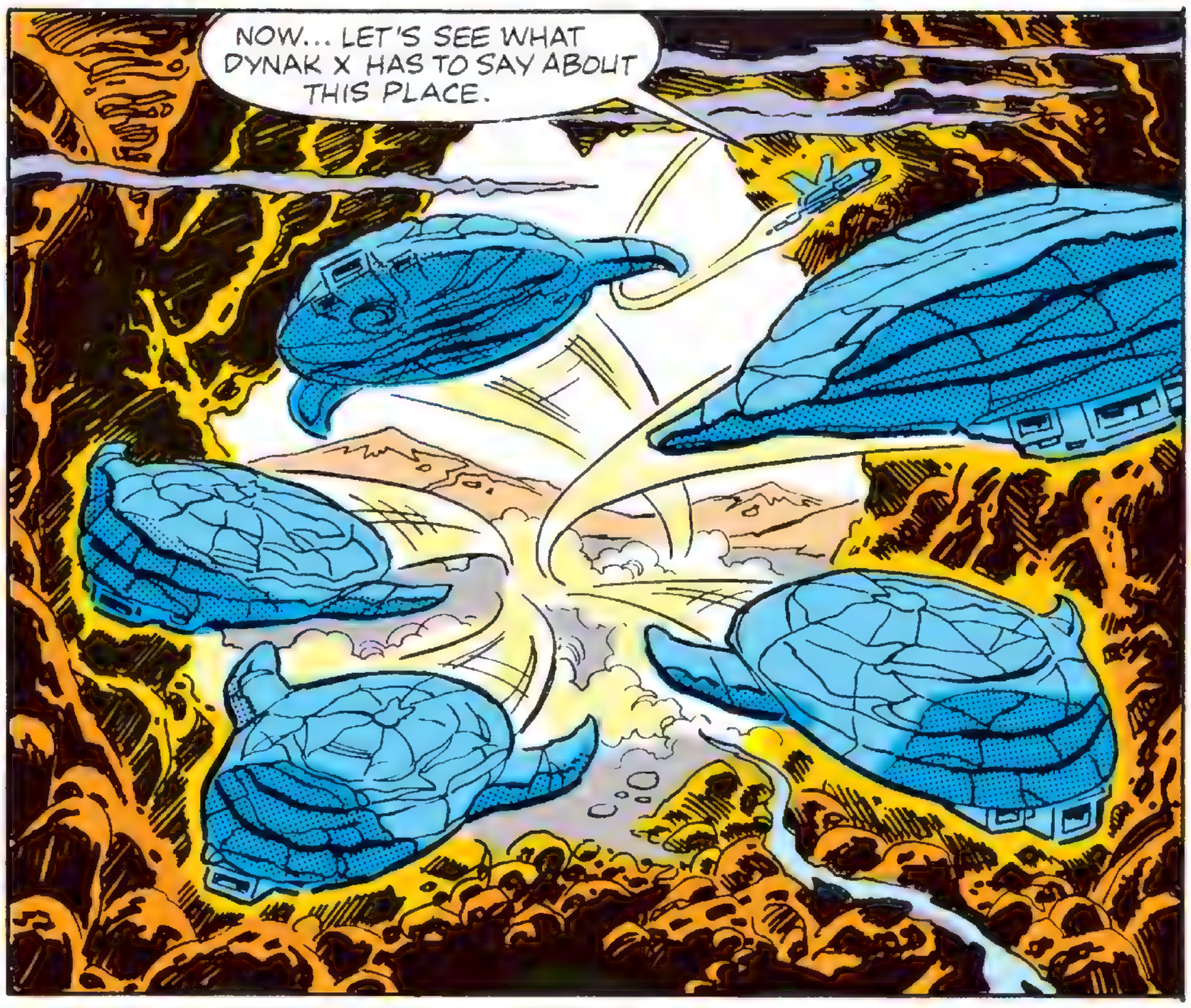

WHAT?

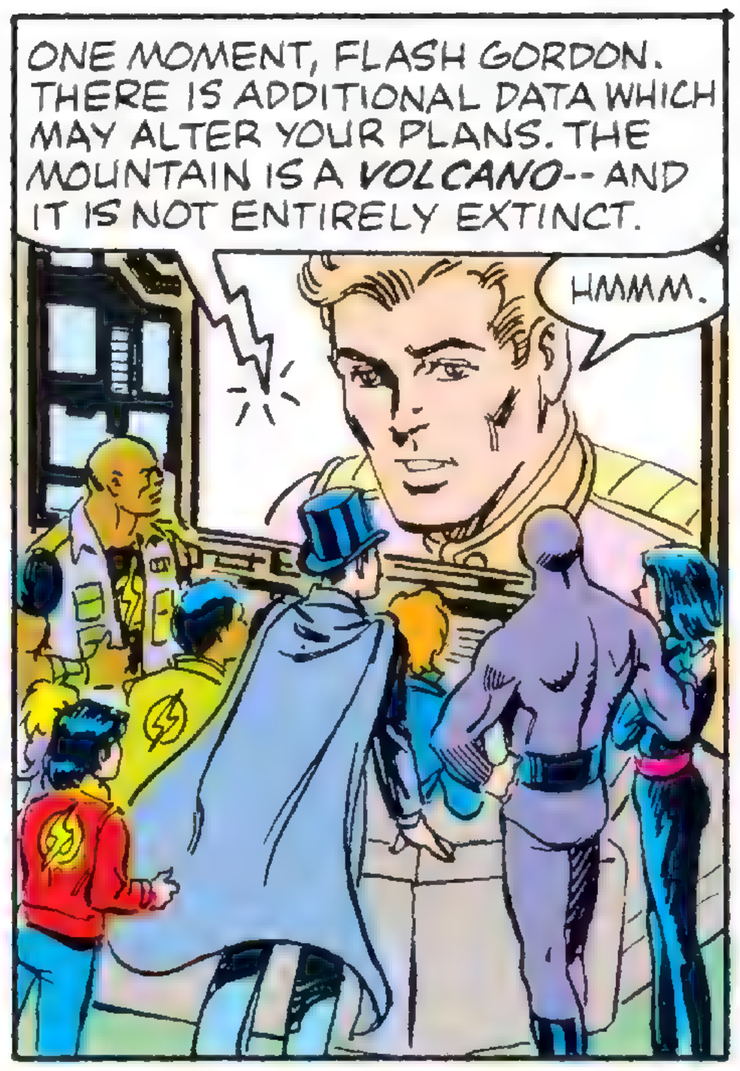

IMPOSSIBLE! WHERE HAVE THEY GONE? THEY CAN'T SIMPLY HAVE VANISHED!
AND AS WE LEAVE MING TO CONTEMPLATE HIS NEXT MOVE...


WELL, GENTLEMEN, THIS IS IT! AND WE'RE IN THE CLEAR THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN WHO YOU WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET PERSONALLY IN JUST A FEW MOMENTS.

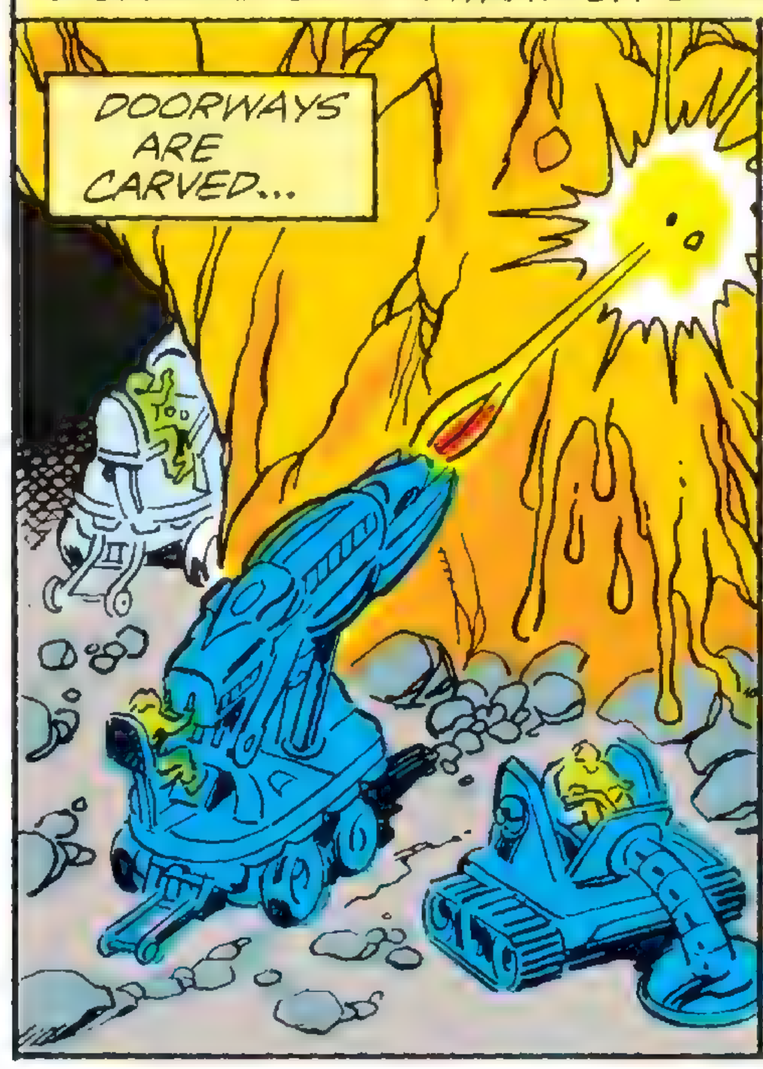

FIRST, MORBIUS, THERE IS SOMETHING I'D LIKE YOU TO DO.
ALL YOU NEED DO IS ASK!
WE'RE GOING TO NEED AN OPENING IN THIS MOUNTAIN--ONE THAT'S LARGE ENOUGH FOR OUR SHIP TO PASS THROUGH. WE CAN ACTUALLY USE THE INTERIOR AS A PLACE TO STORE OUR SHIPS--AND PERHAPS WE WILL BE ABLE TO DO CONSIDERABLY MORE HERE!

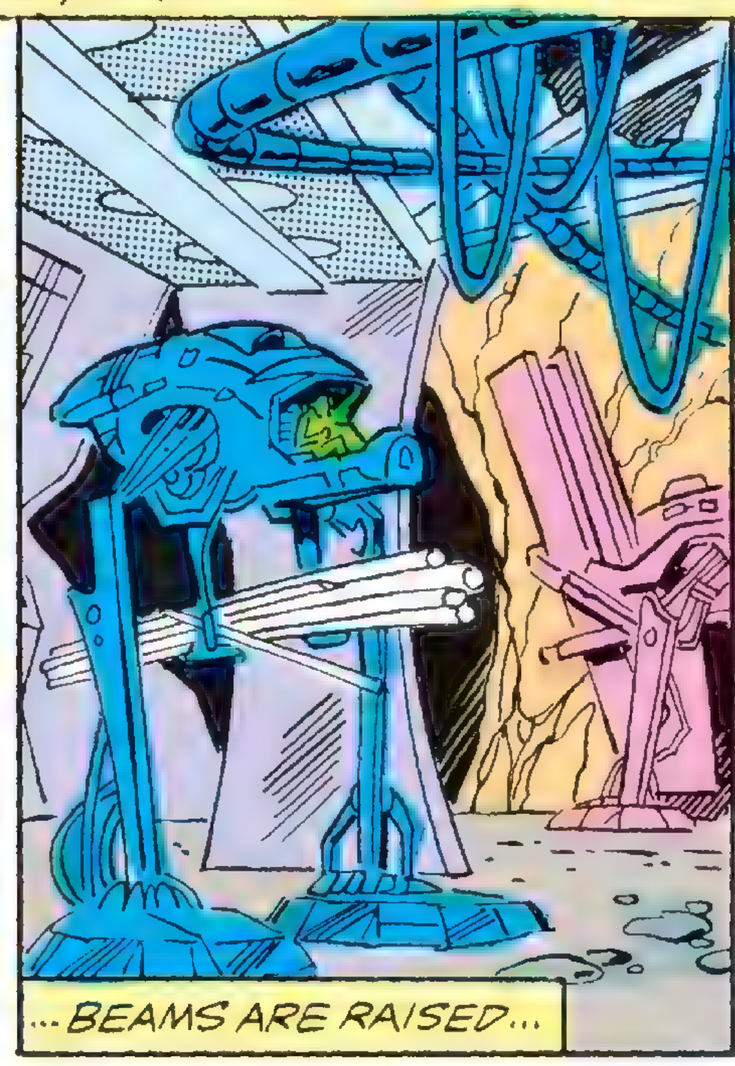

AS YOU WISH, MY FRIEND!
KRAKOOSH

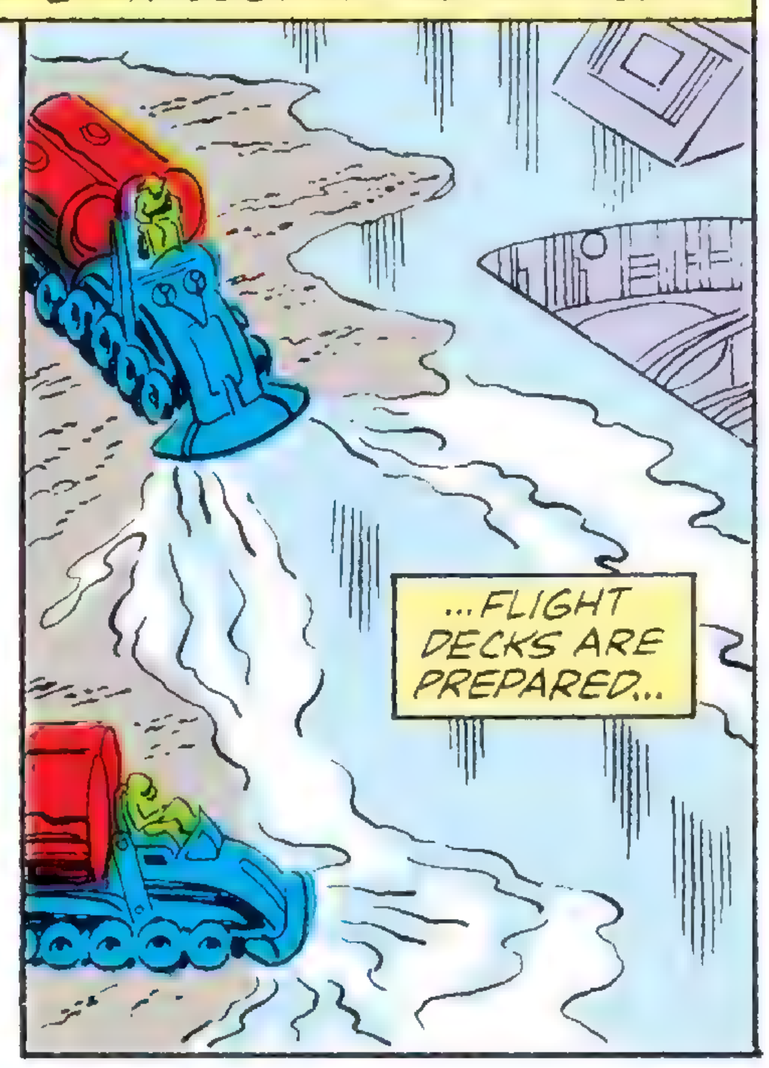

NOW... LET'S SEE WHAT DYNAK X HAS TO SAY ABOUT THIS PLACE.

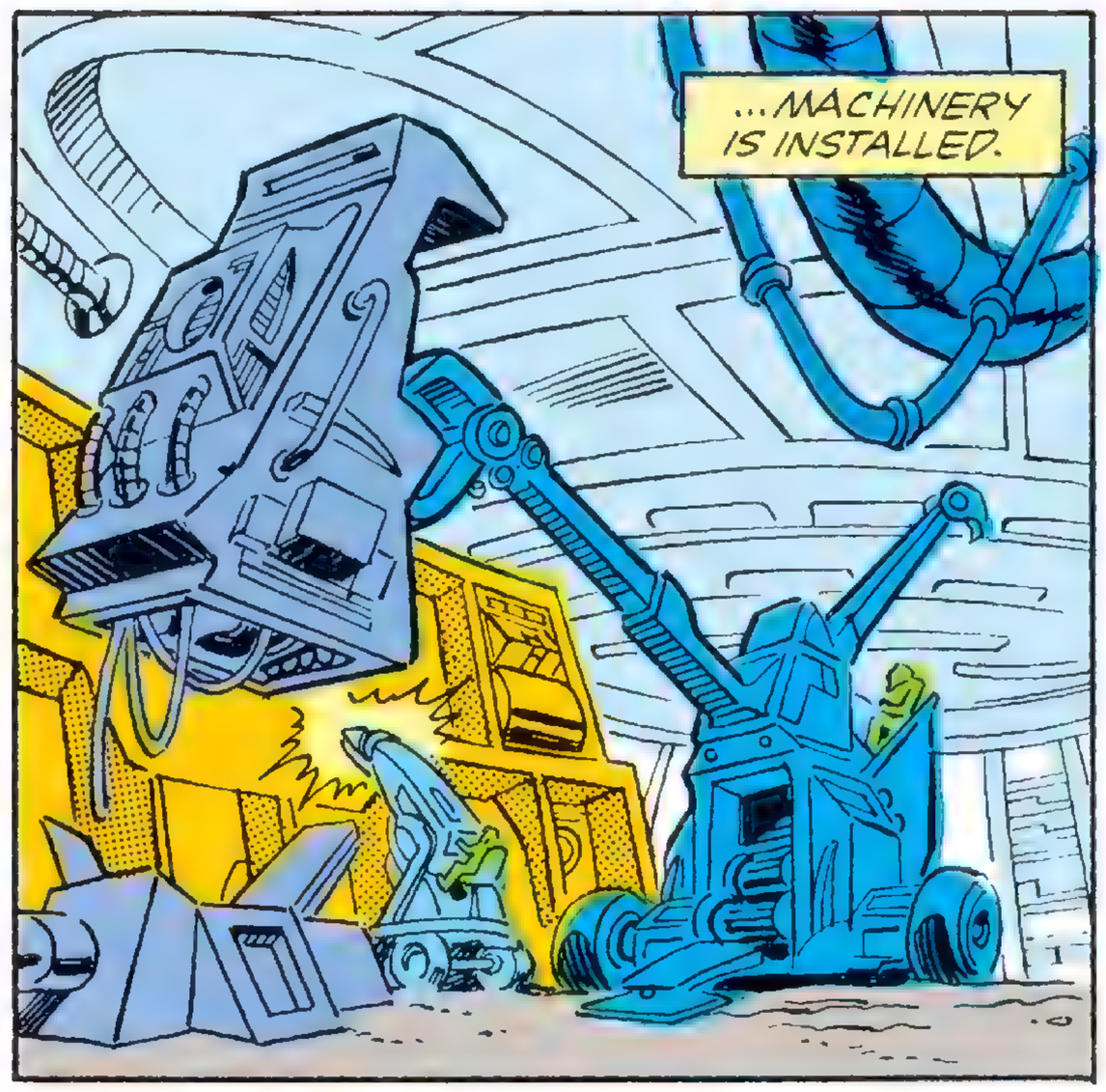


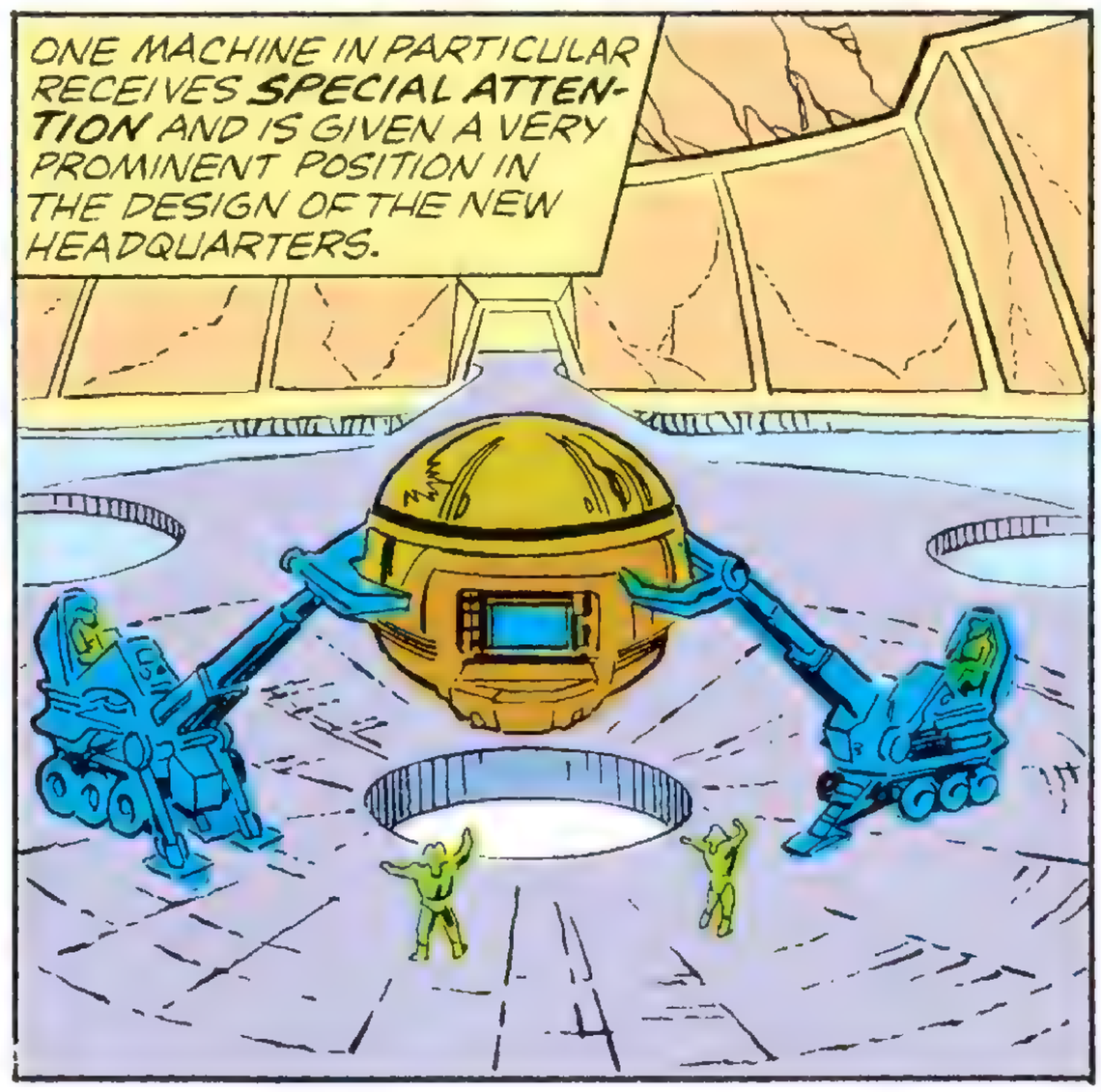
AND, SO, THE CONSTRUCTION OF MONITOR IS BEGUN. WORK THAT WOULD OTHERWISE TAKE MONTHS IS COMPLETED IN A MATTER OF DAYS, THANKS TO THE SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY OF THE ALIEN CRYL.



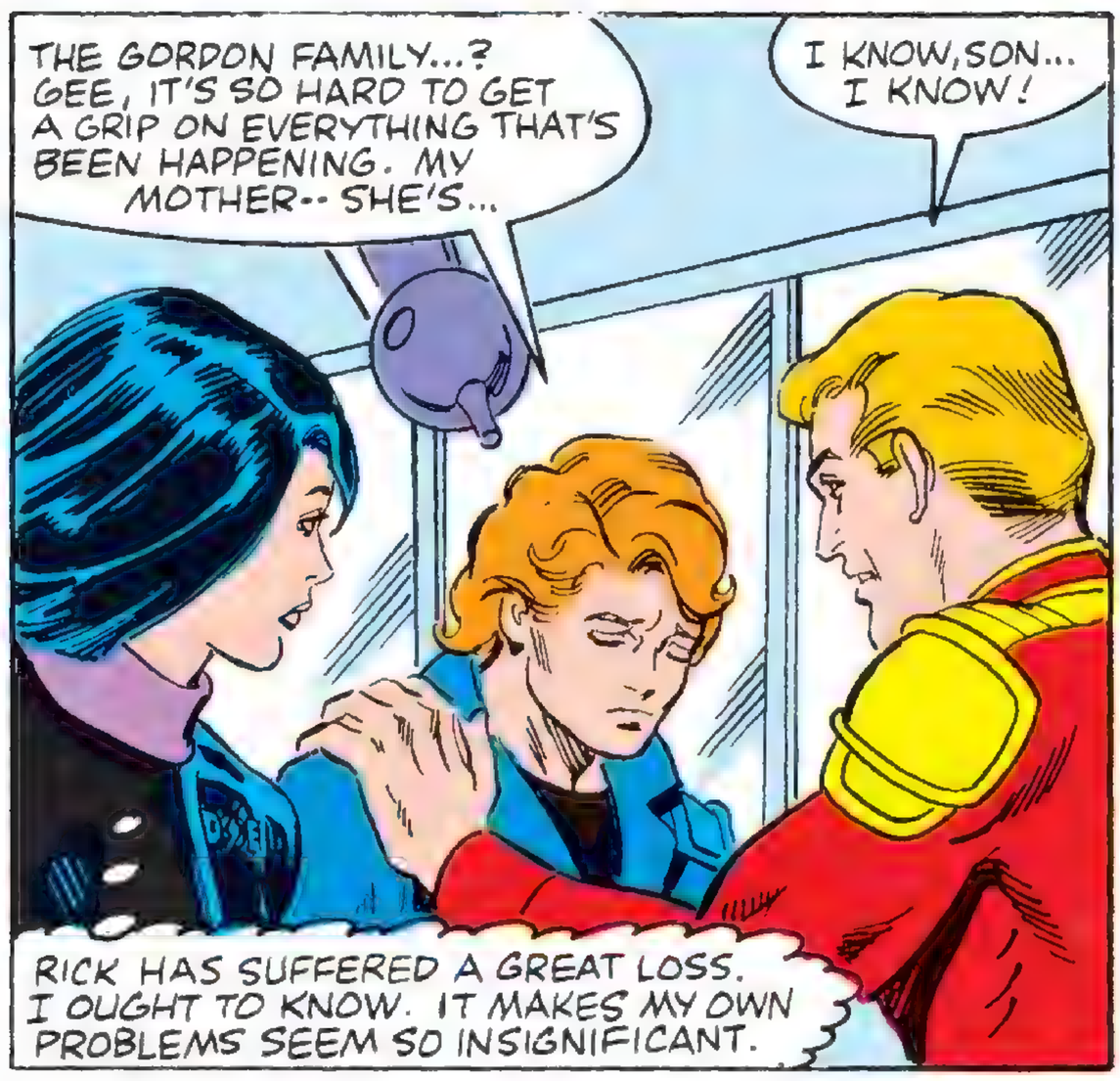



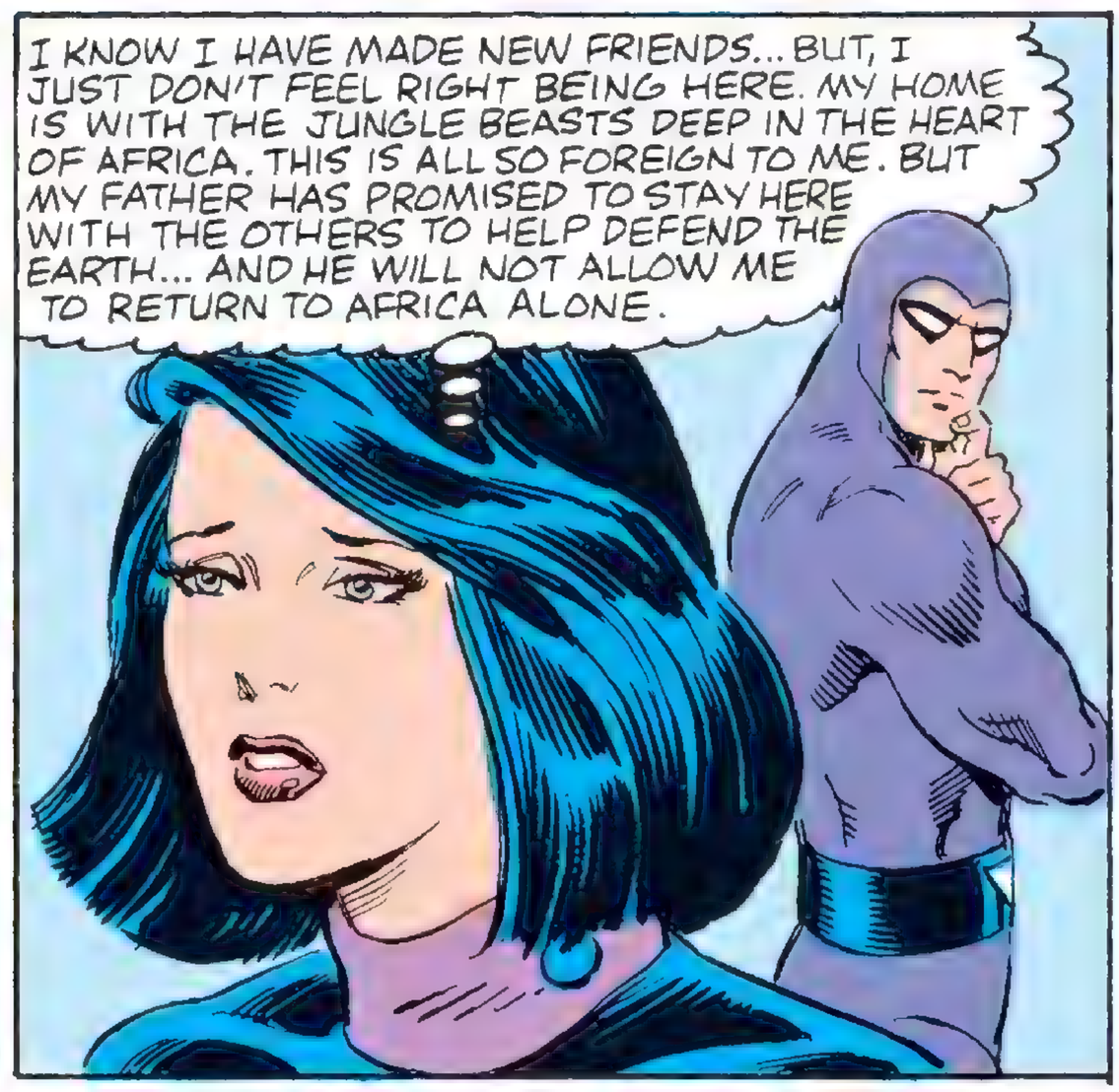
YOU SEE, KSHIN, EVEN THOUGH MRS. GORDON HAS PERISHED, HER SPIRIT WILL STILL BE A VITAL, THRIVING FORCE HERE AT MONITOR. IT IS ONLY FITTING.

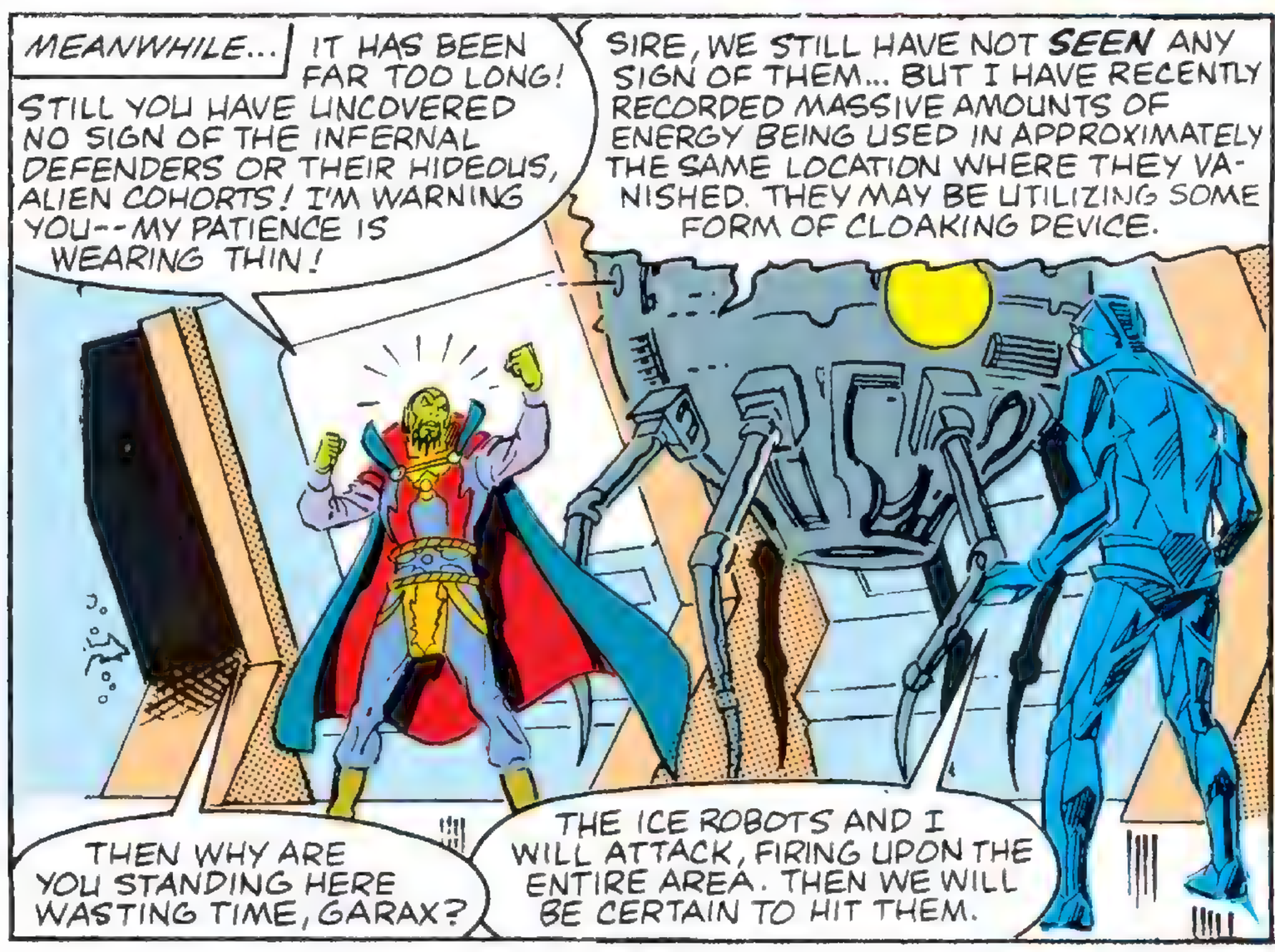
IT WAS BRILLIANT OF RICK TO SUGGEST CAPPING THE ACTIVE SHAFT TO HARNESS THE GEO-THERMAL ENERGY OF THE VOLCANO AS A MEANS OF POWERING MONITOR. HE TURNED A POTENTIAL THREAT INTO AN ORGANIC SOLUTION TO OUR ENERGY PROBLEM!

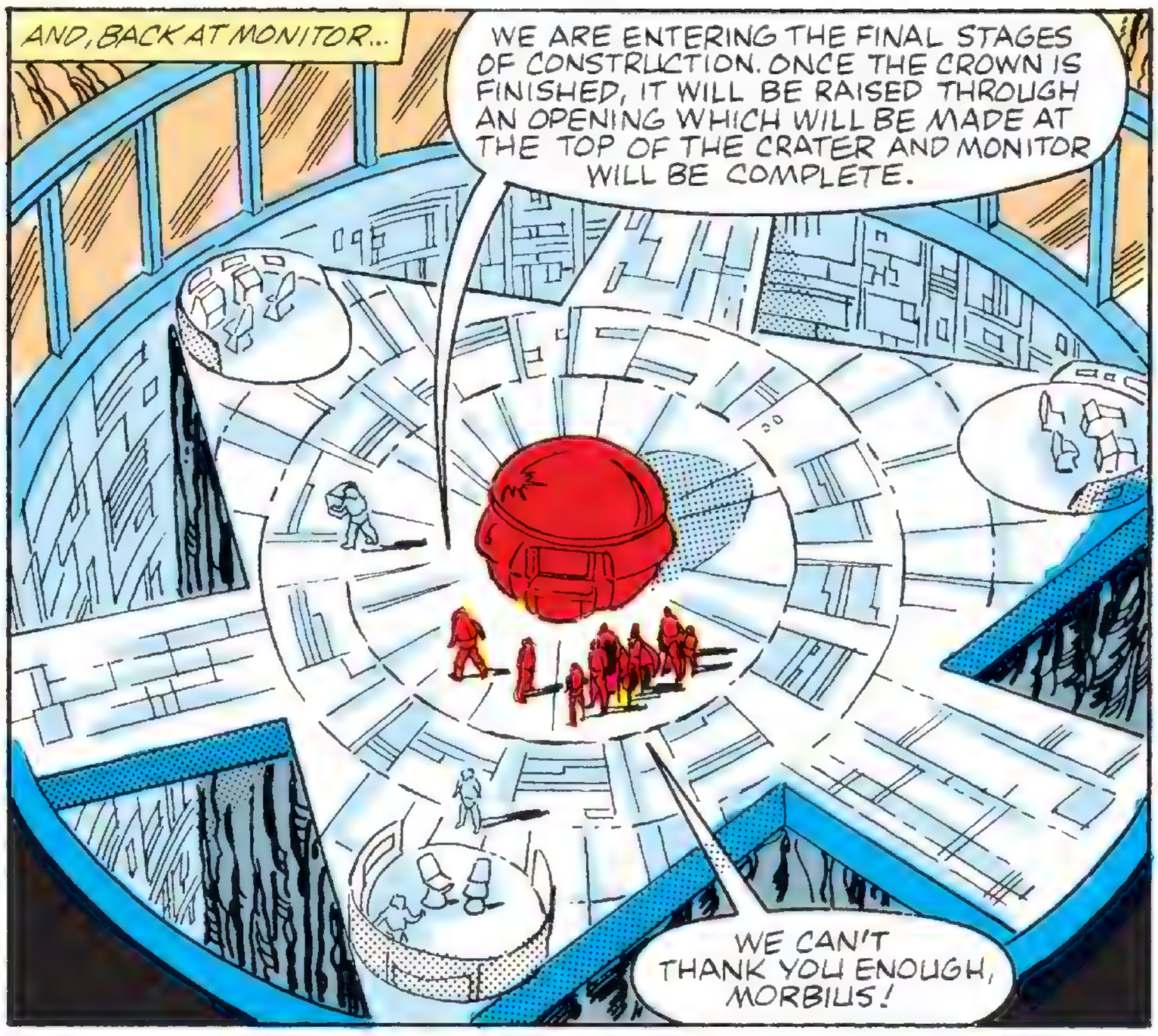
WELL, IT WAS REALLY DYNAK X WHO FIGURED OUT A WAY TO MAKE MY IDEA A REALITY. WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT HER.

IT'S NICE TO SEE THAT THE GORDON FAMILY STILL WORKS SO WELL TOGETHER!

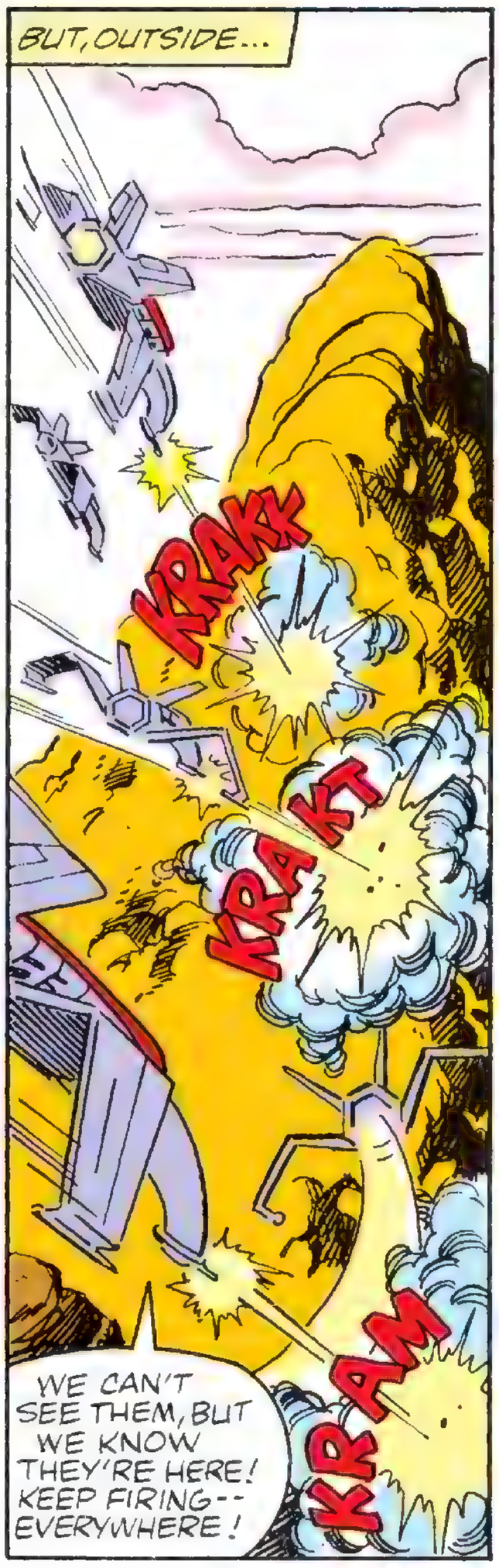


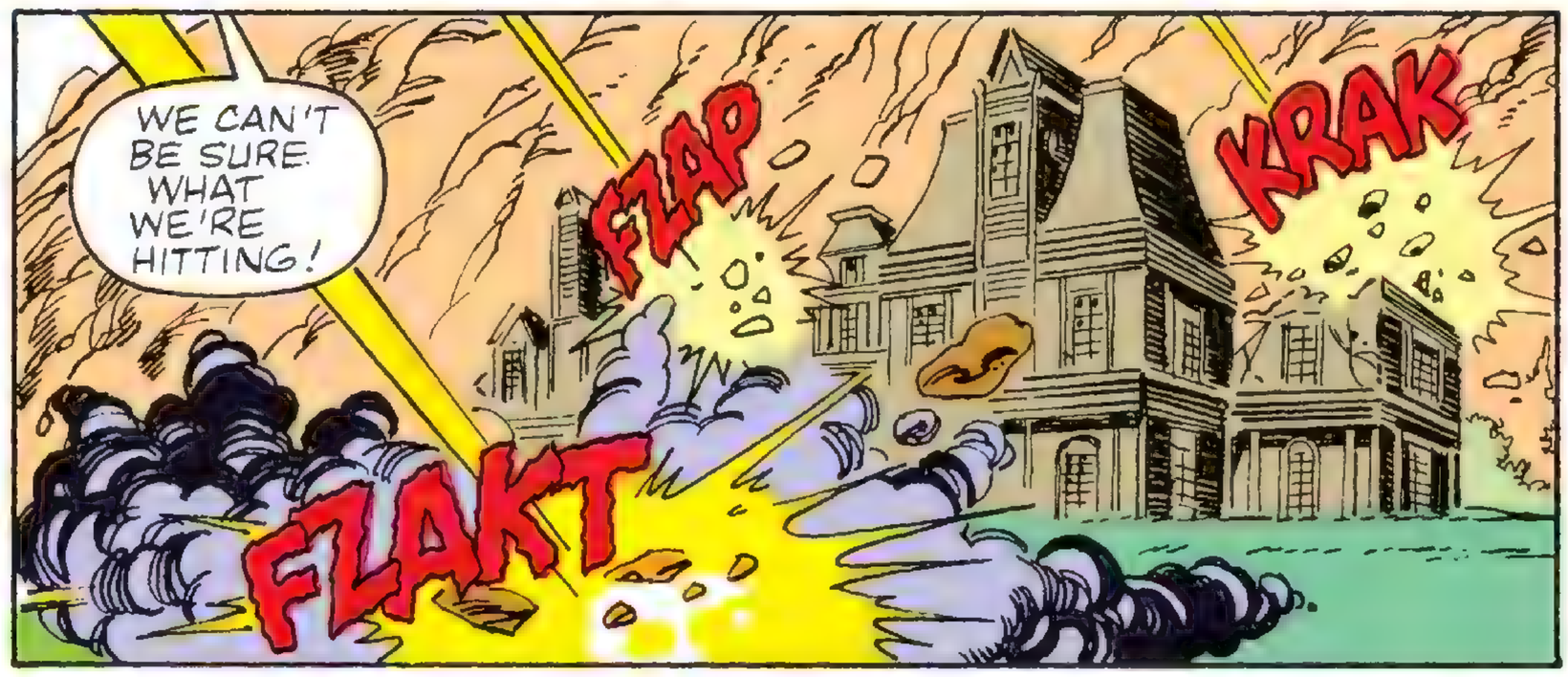




AND, BACK AT MONITOR...
WE ARE ENTERING THE FINAL STAGES OF CONSTRUCTION. ONCE THE CROWN IS FINISHED, IT WILL BE RAISED THROUGH AN OPENING WHICH WILL BE MADE AT THE TOP OF THE CRATER AND MONITOR WILL BE COMPLETE.
WE CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH, MORBIUS!

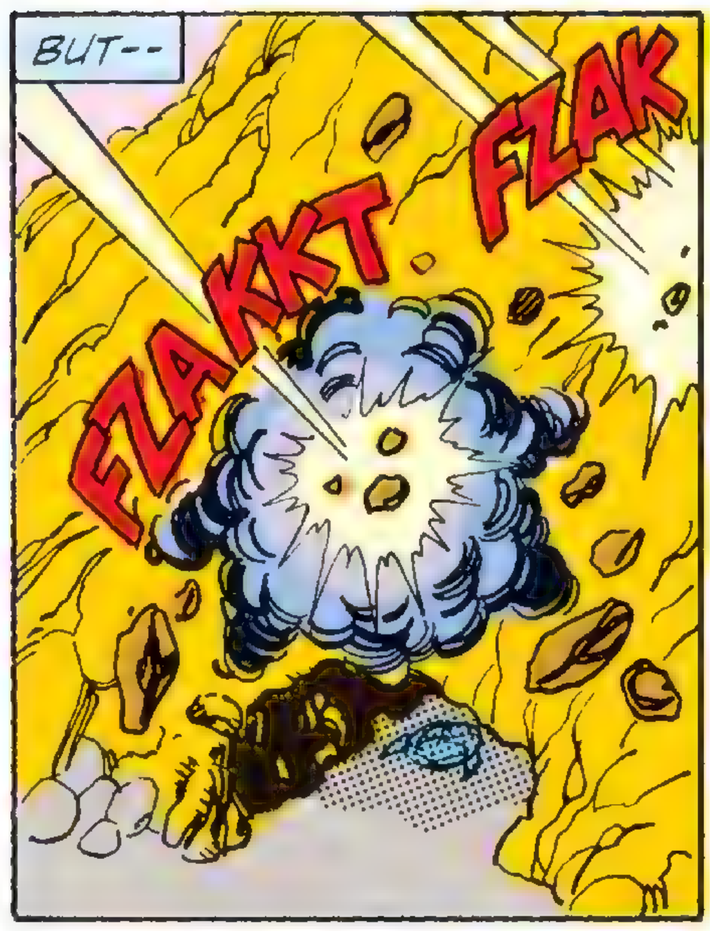
IT WAS A PLEASURE TO ASSIST YOU!


BUT, OUTSIDE...
KRAKK
KRAKT
KRAM
WE CAN'T SEE THEM, BUT WE KNOW THEY'RE HERE! KEEP FIRING-- EVERYWHERE!

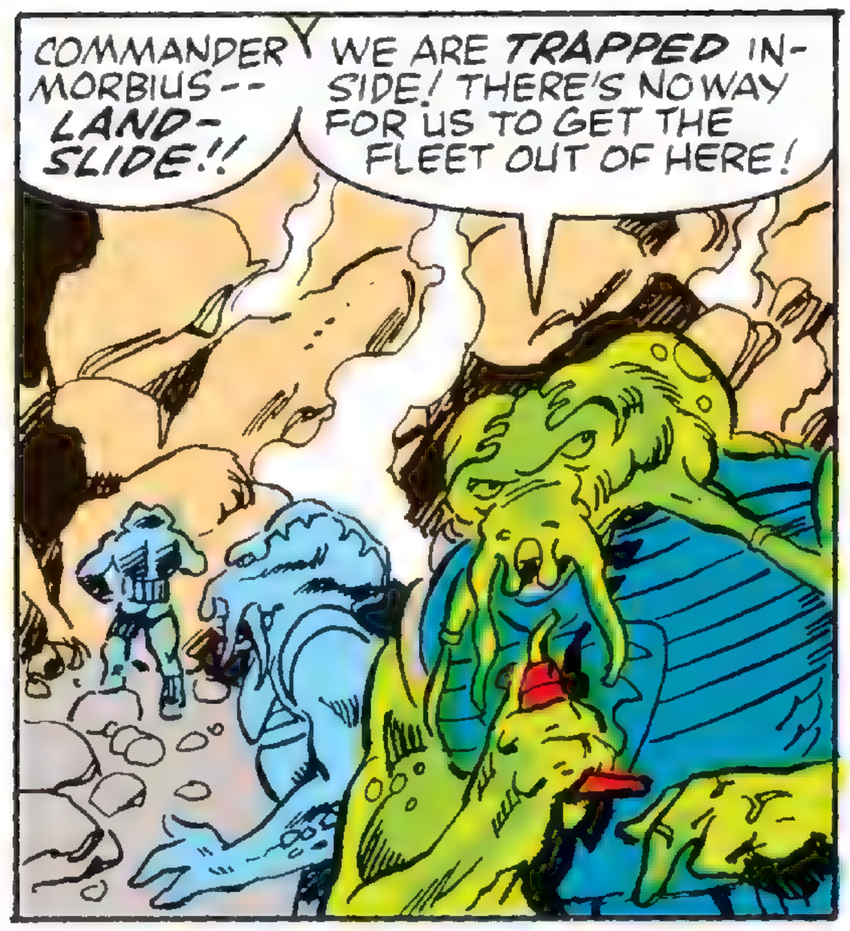

WE CAN'T BE SURE WHAT WE'RE HITTING!
FZAP
KRAK
FLAKT

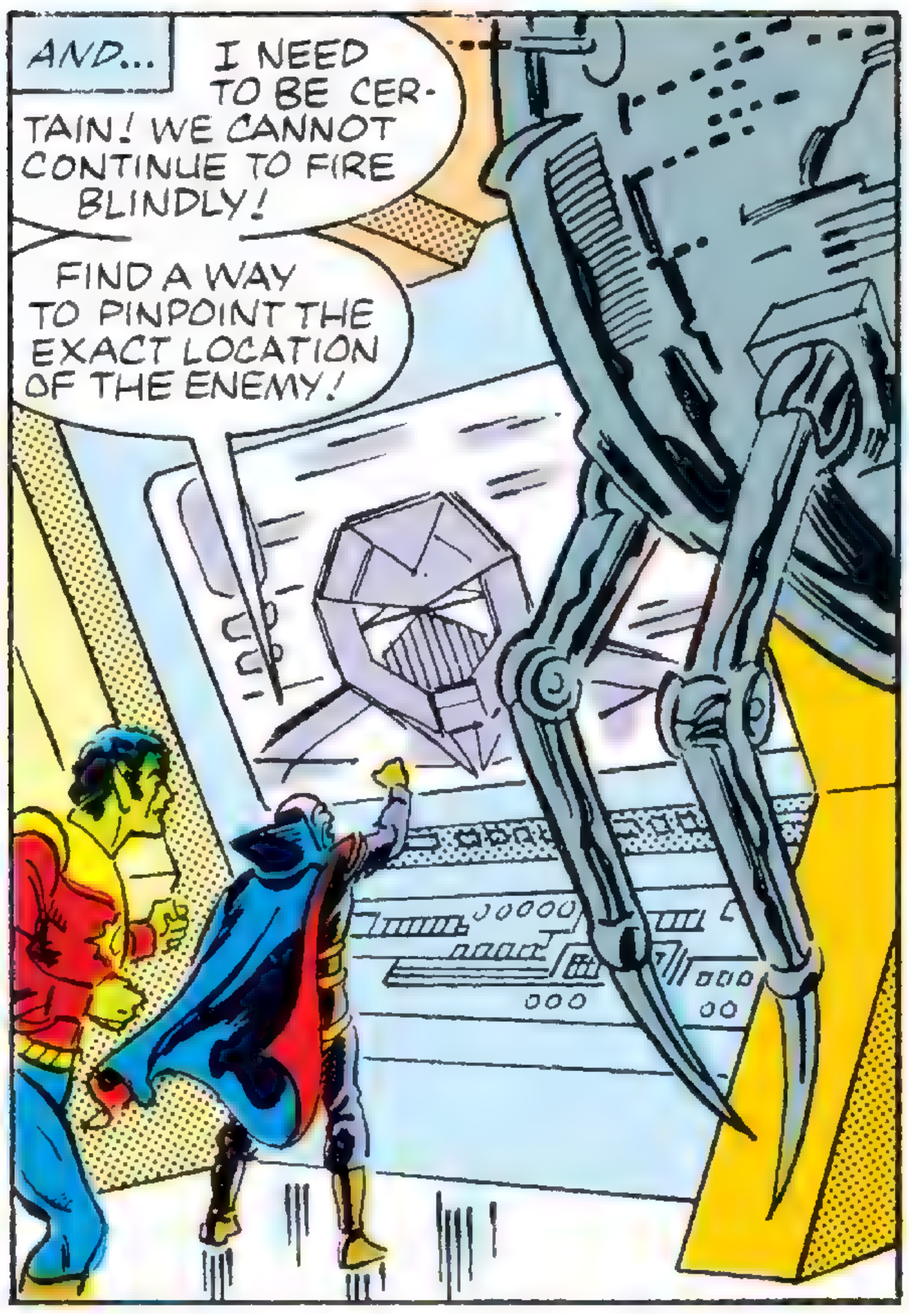
WH-WHAT IS HAPPENING?
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! GUESS MING FINALLY FIGURED OUT THAT WE'VE BEEN HIDING RIGHT UNDER HIS UGLY, GREEN NOSE.

TO YOUR SHIPS, MEN!


BUT--
FZAKKT
FZAK

RRRMMBBLLL


COMMANDER MORBIUS-- LAND-SLIDE!!
WE ARE TRAPPED INSIDE! THERE'S NO WAY FOR US TO GET THE FLEET OUT OF HERE!


AND...
I NEED TO BE CERTAIN! WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO FIRE BLINDLY!
FIND A WAY TO PINPOINT THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE ENEMY!

I WANT TO DESTROY THE DEFENDERS ONCE AND FOR ALL!

I'VE NO SPELL TO FOOL THEM WITH THIS TIME! THEY KNOW WE'RE HIDING NEARBY!
WONDER HOW WE'RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO DEFEND THE EARTH. RIGHT NOW WE DON'T SEEM ABLE TO DEFEND OURSELVES!
WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO LAUNCH A DIRECT ATTACK...

BUT, THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO WIN A BATTLE! SOMETIMES ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS OUT-SMART YOUR ENEMY! THERE MUST BE A WAY!
AND I THINK I KNOW WHAT IT IS BUT IT WILL PLACE DYNAK X IN GREAT DANGER. I WOULD HATE TO LOSE DYNAK... YET, FOR ALL DYNAK X IS... I MUST REMEMBER WHAT SHE ISN'T! DYNAK X IS STILL A MACHINE!
THERE ARE HUMAN LIVES TO BE CONSIDERED HERE! I MUST RISK IT!

DYNAK, I NEED YOU TO BROADCAST A STRONG SOS SIGNAL EMANATING FROM THE TOP OF THE VOLCANO. WE ACTUALLY WANT TO SEND OUT A HOMING BEACON! LET'S JUST HOPE THEY DON'T TRACE THE BEACON BACK TO ITS SOURCE HERE BELOW.
I UNDERSTAND.
WE ACTUALLY WANT THEM TO BLAST AWAY THE TOP OF THIS VOLCANO! WE WANT THEM TO BELIEVE THEY'VE DESTROYED OUR BASE!

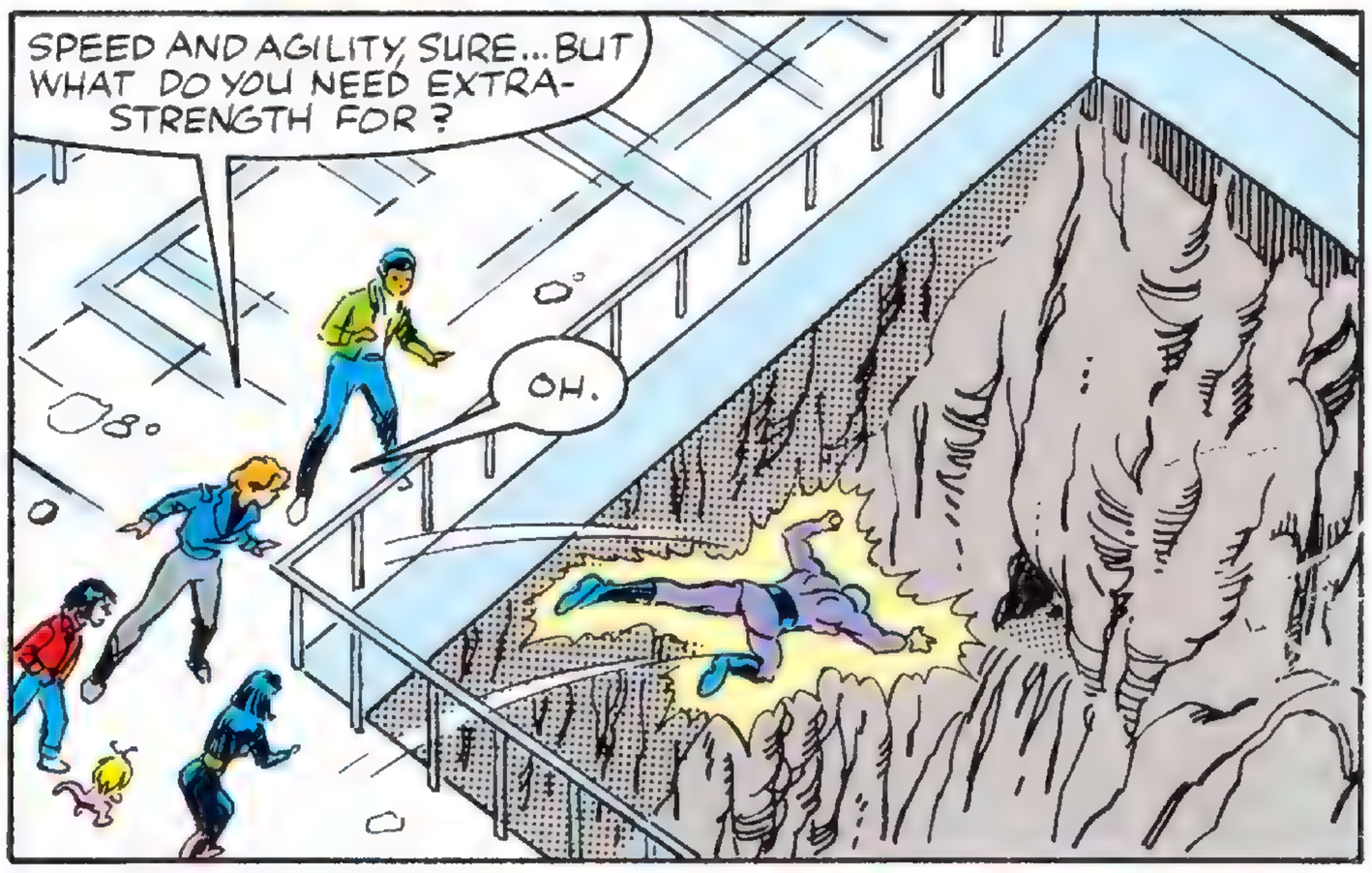
IF NECESSARY, WE'LL ALSO HAVE AN OPENING FOR OUR SHIPS TO BLAST OFF THROUGH. BESIDES... IT'LL SAVE US FROM HAVING TO DO IT. AFTERALL, WE STILL HAVE TO RAISE THE CROWN.
SOUND REASONING... AND I BELIEVE I HAVE AN IDEA THAT MAY AID YOUR PLAN.

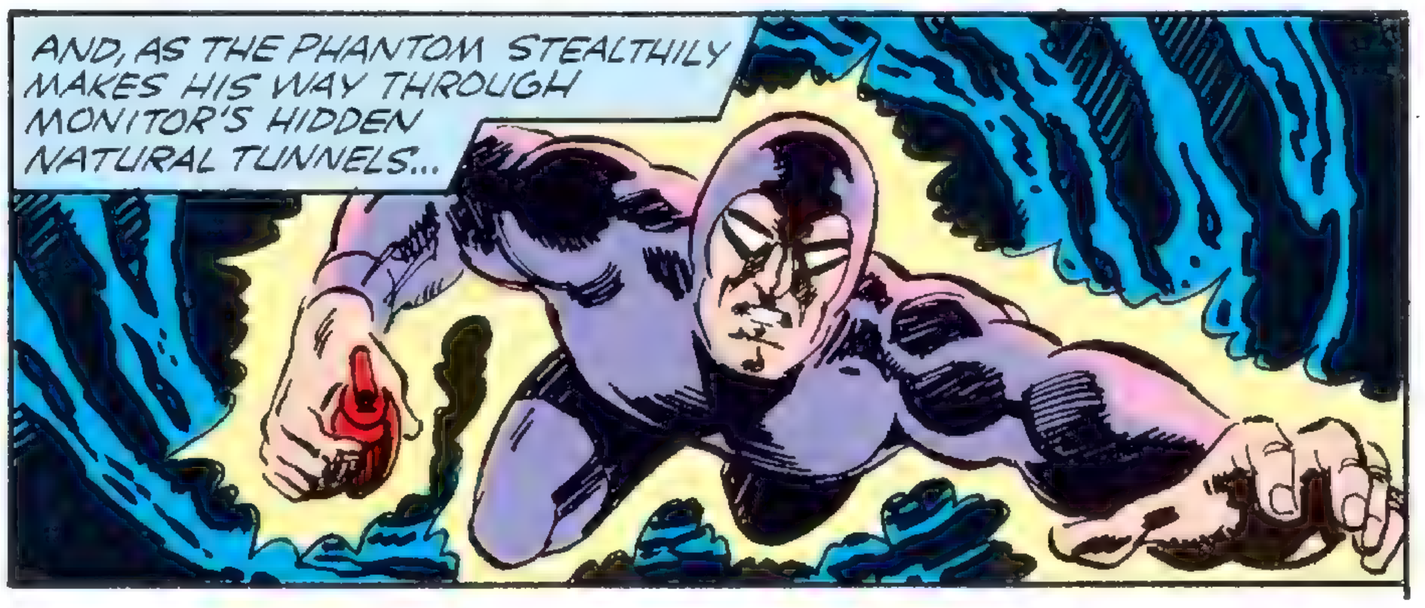
THIS IS A DIAGRAM SHOWING WHERE THE ATTACK HAS FRACTURED PART OF THE GEOTHERMAL CAP. PRESSURE IS BUILDING UP FROM THE LAVA AND STEAM--THE SITUATION COULD PROVE POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS!

BUT, AN EXPLOSION AT JUST THE RIGHT POINT--SHOWN HERE--WOULD NOT ONLY SOLVE THE PROBLEM, BUT THE RELEASE OF STEAM AND LAVA WOULD CONVINCE MING THAT THE VOLCANO HAS ERUPTED! IT IS ONLY A QUESTION OF TIMING!

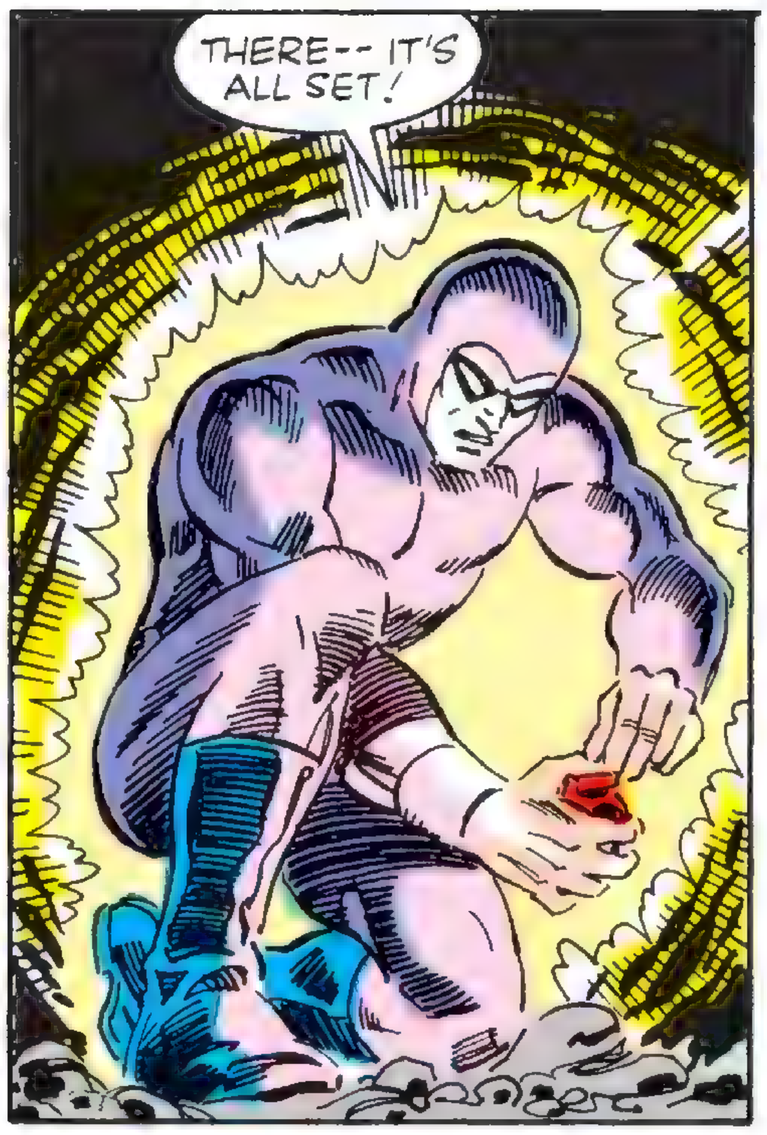
I WILL PLACE THE BOMB IN THE APPROPRIATE CAVERN.
THIS OUGHT TO DO THE TRICK.

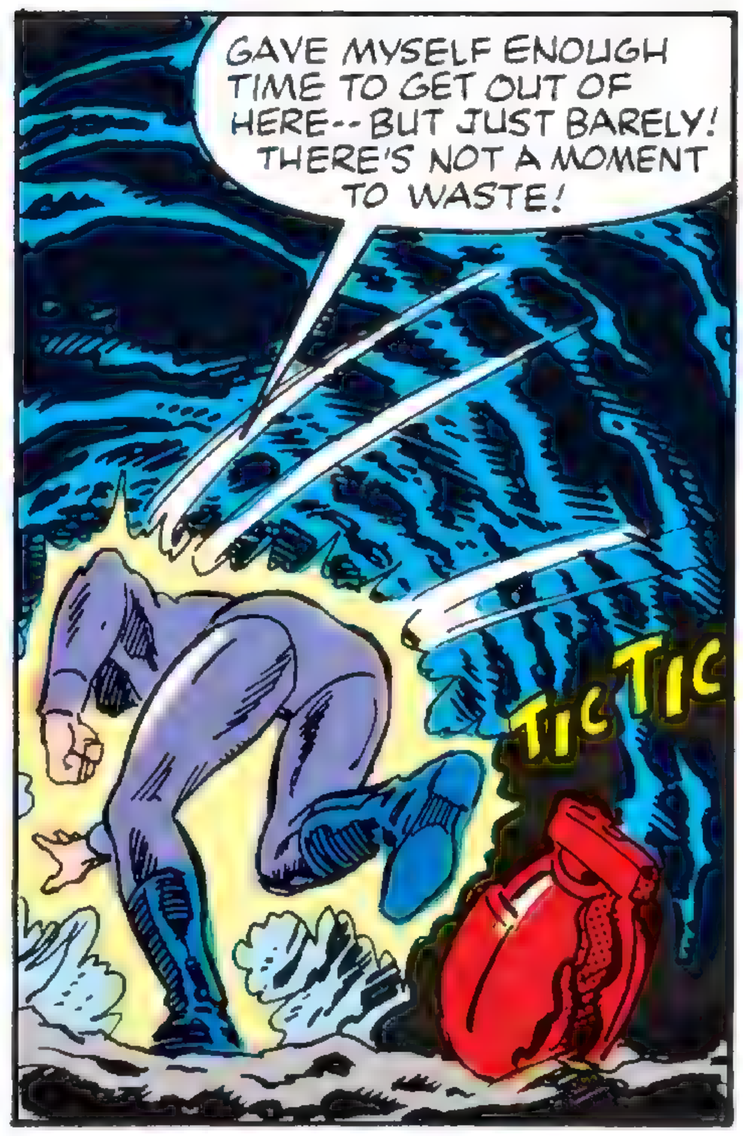
I WILL SUMMON THE POWER OF TEN TIGERS FOR THE SPEED, AGILITY AND STRENGTH THAT THIS TASK WILL REQUIRE.


SPEED AND AGILITY, SURE...BUT WHAT DO YOU NEED EXTRA-STRENGTH FOR?
OH.


AND, AS THE PHANTOM STEALTHILY MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH MONITOR'S HIDDEN NATURAL TUNNELS...

DYNAK BEGINS TO BROADCAST THE S.O.S. BEACON FROM THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN--A BEACON WHICH DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED!
YOUR MAJESTY, WE ARE PICKING UP ON A DISTRESS SIGNAL. IT IS COMING FROM INSIDE THE TIP OF THE VOLCANO. WE CAN NOW CONCENTRATE OUR FIRE ON THAT SPOT AND ELIMINATE THE THREAT OF THE DEFENDERS ONCE AND FOR ALL!
EXCELLENT! THEY ARE HELPLESS!

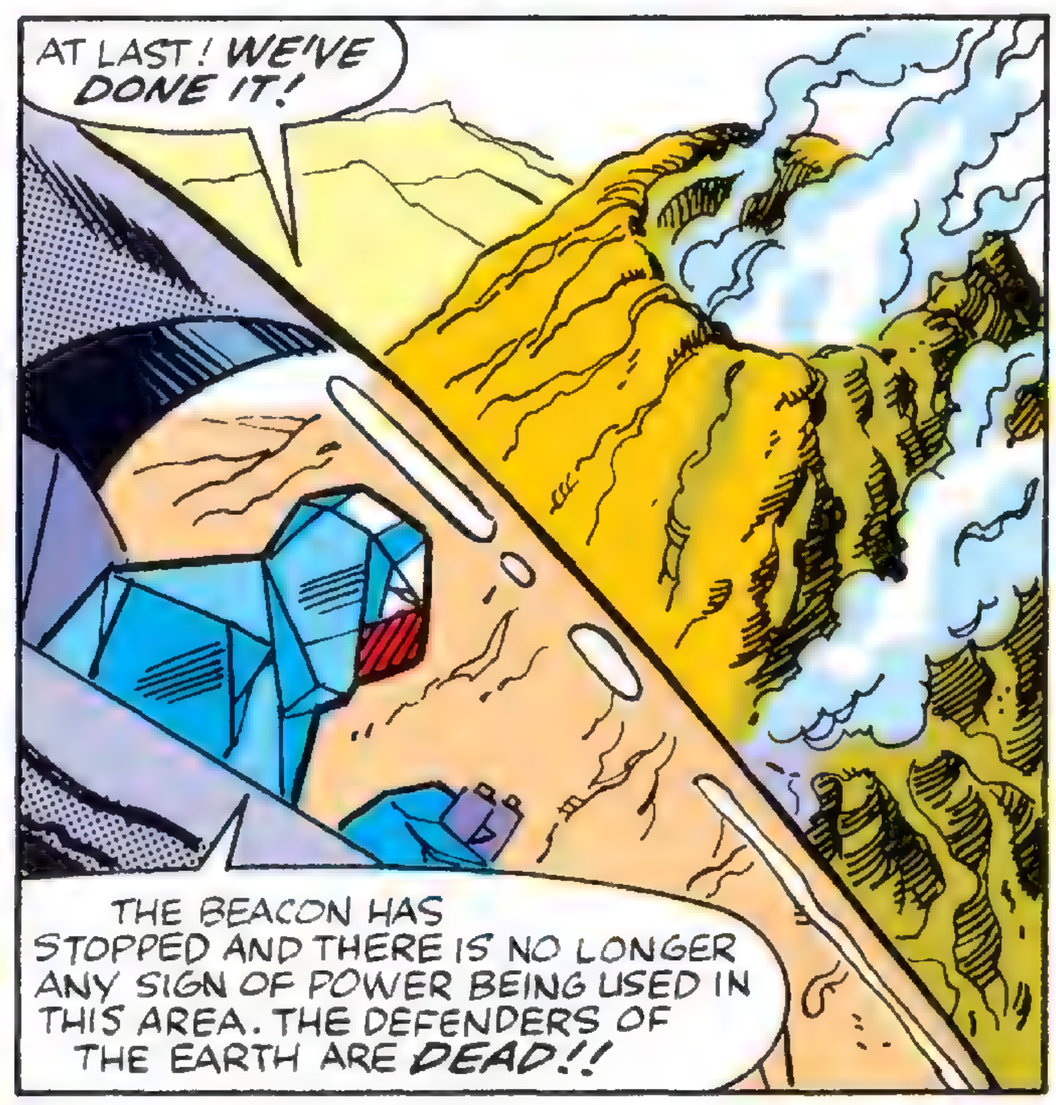

THERE-- IT'S ALL SET!


GAVE MYSELF ENOUGH TIME TO GET OUT OF HERE-- BUT JUST BARELY! THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO WASTE!
TIC TIC

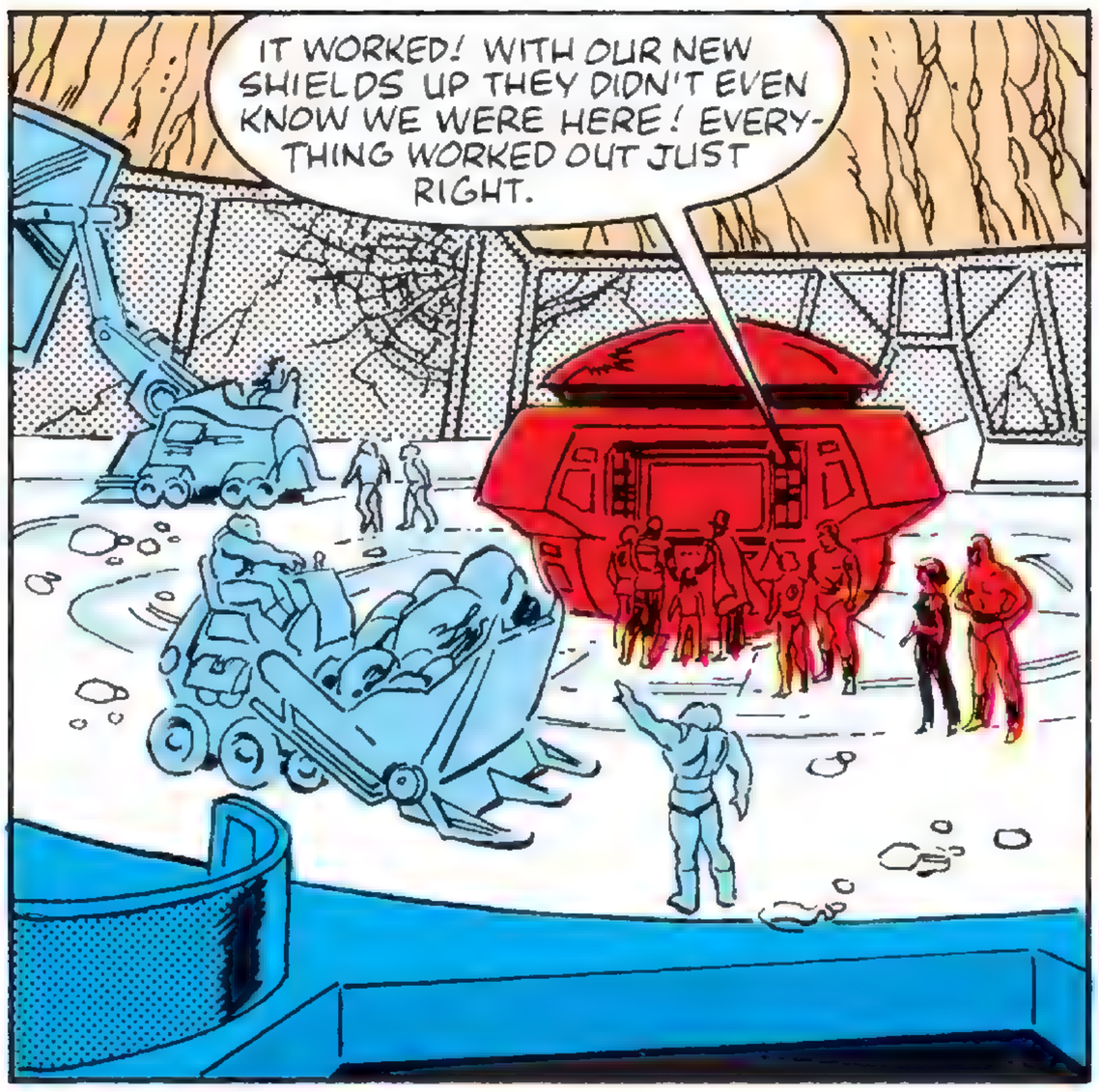
TIC TIC TIC

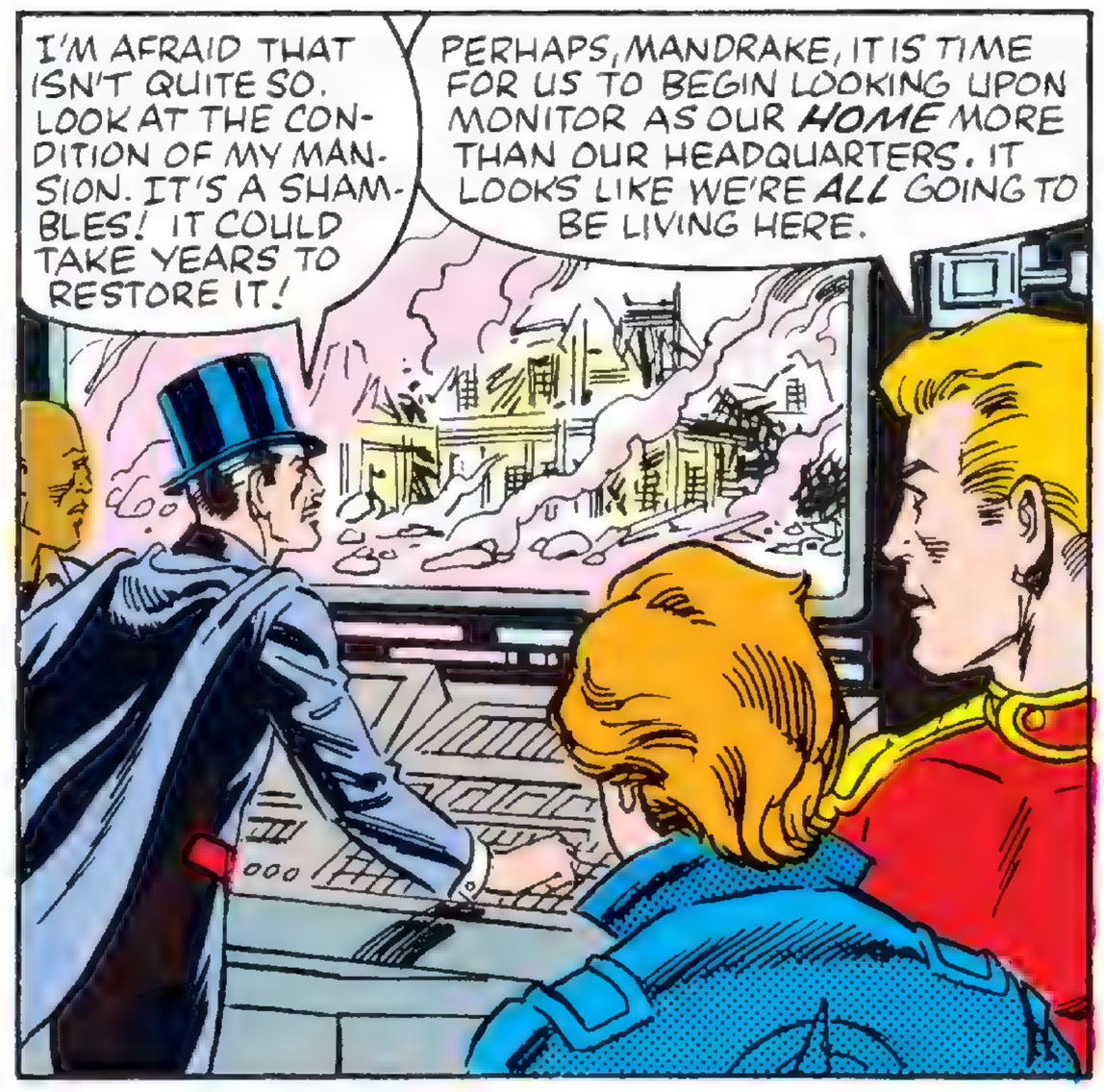
AND, OUTSIDE, THE ROBO-SHIPS CONVERGE TO BLAST TIP OF THE VOLCANO...
FRRROOOMM

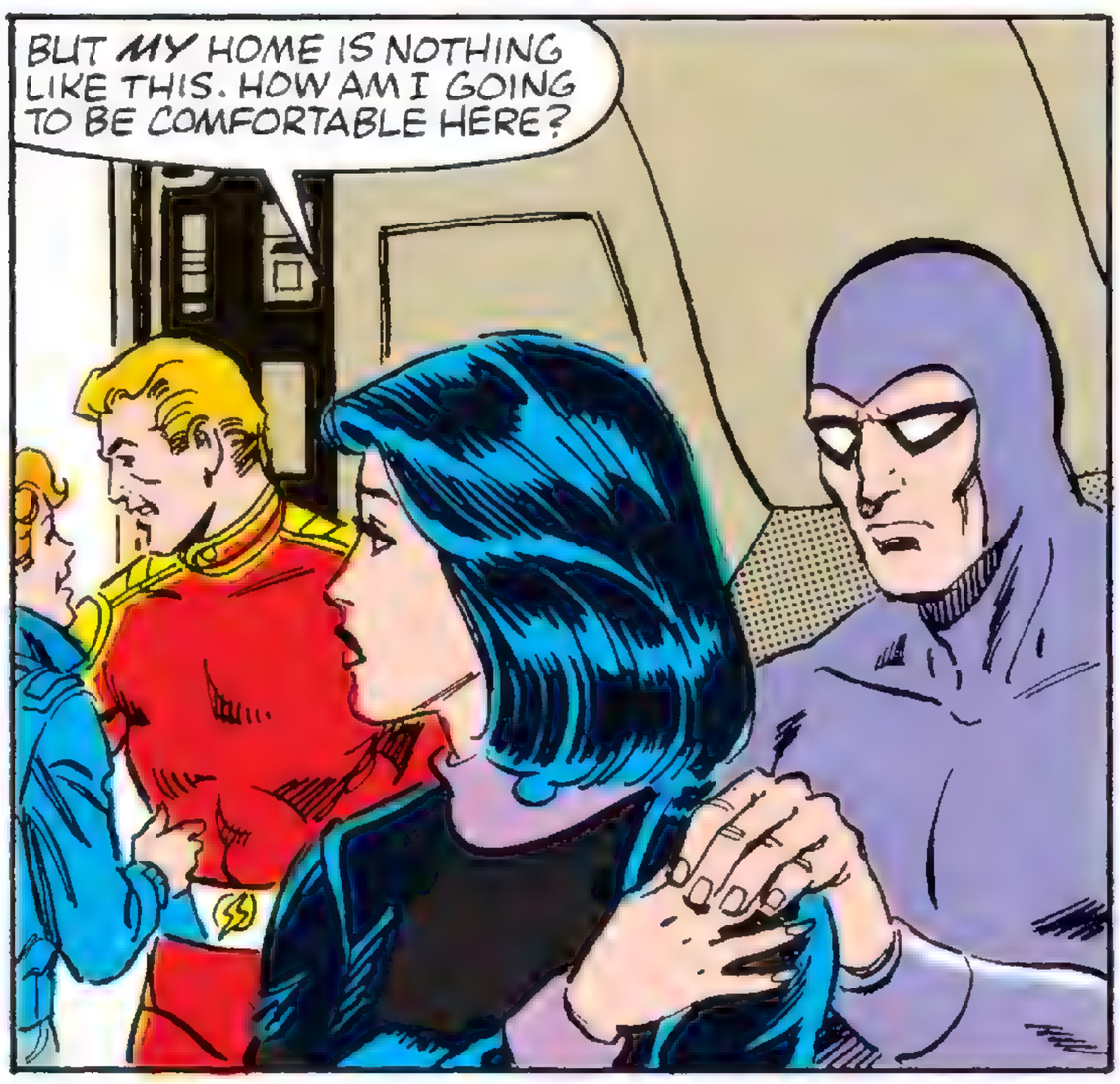
...JUST AS THE BOMB PLANTED BY THE PHANTOM EXPLODES!
KABWAAM


AT LAST! WE'VE DONE IT!
THE BEACON HAS STOPPED AND THERE IS NO LONGER ANY SIGN OF POWER BEING USED IN THIS AREA. THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH ARE DEAD!!

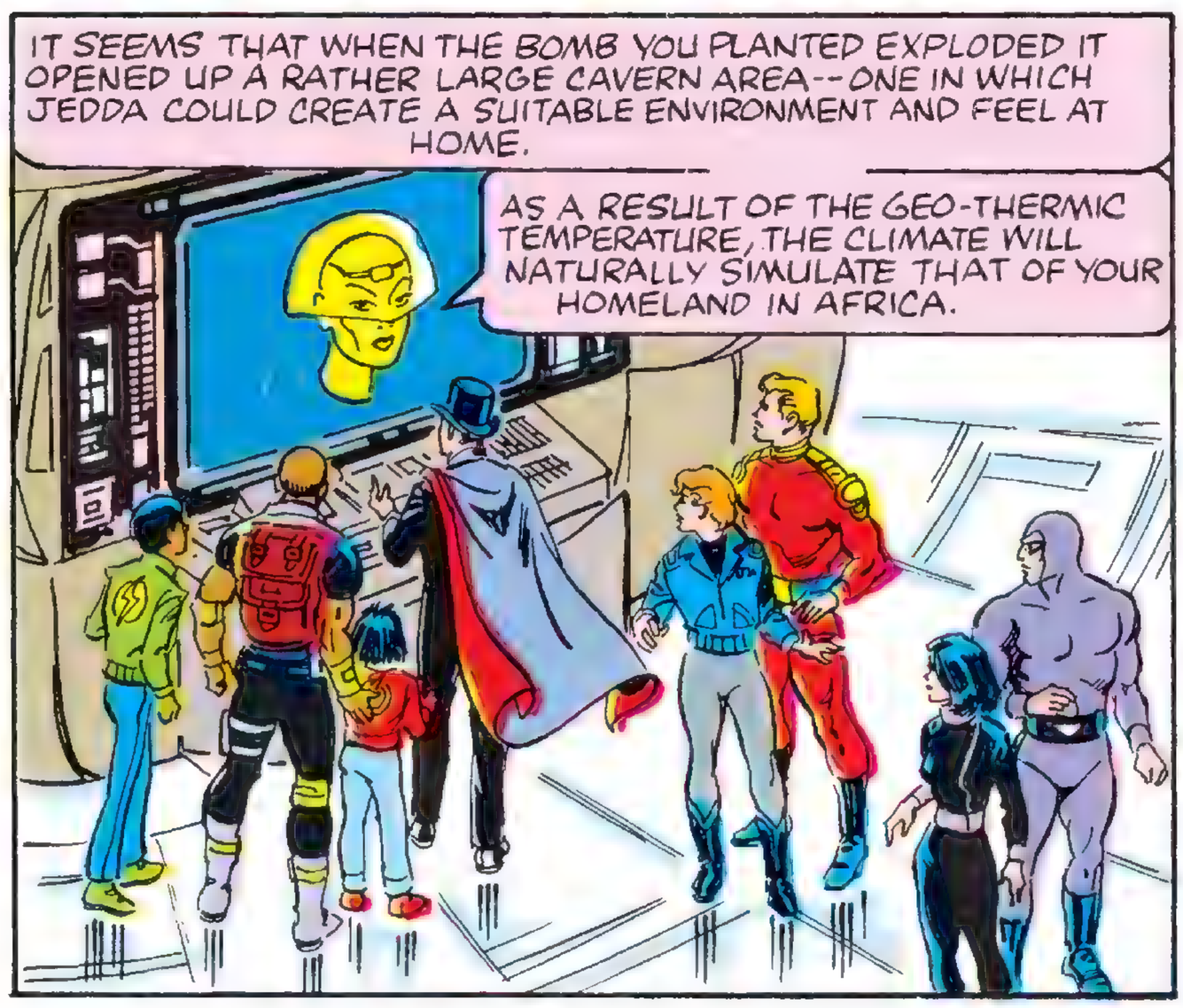
RETURN AT ONCE TO ICE STATION EARTH! YOU HAVE SERVED ME WELL, GARAX, AND YOU SHALL BE GREATLY REWARDED!

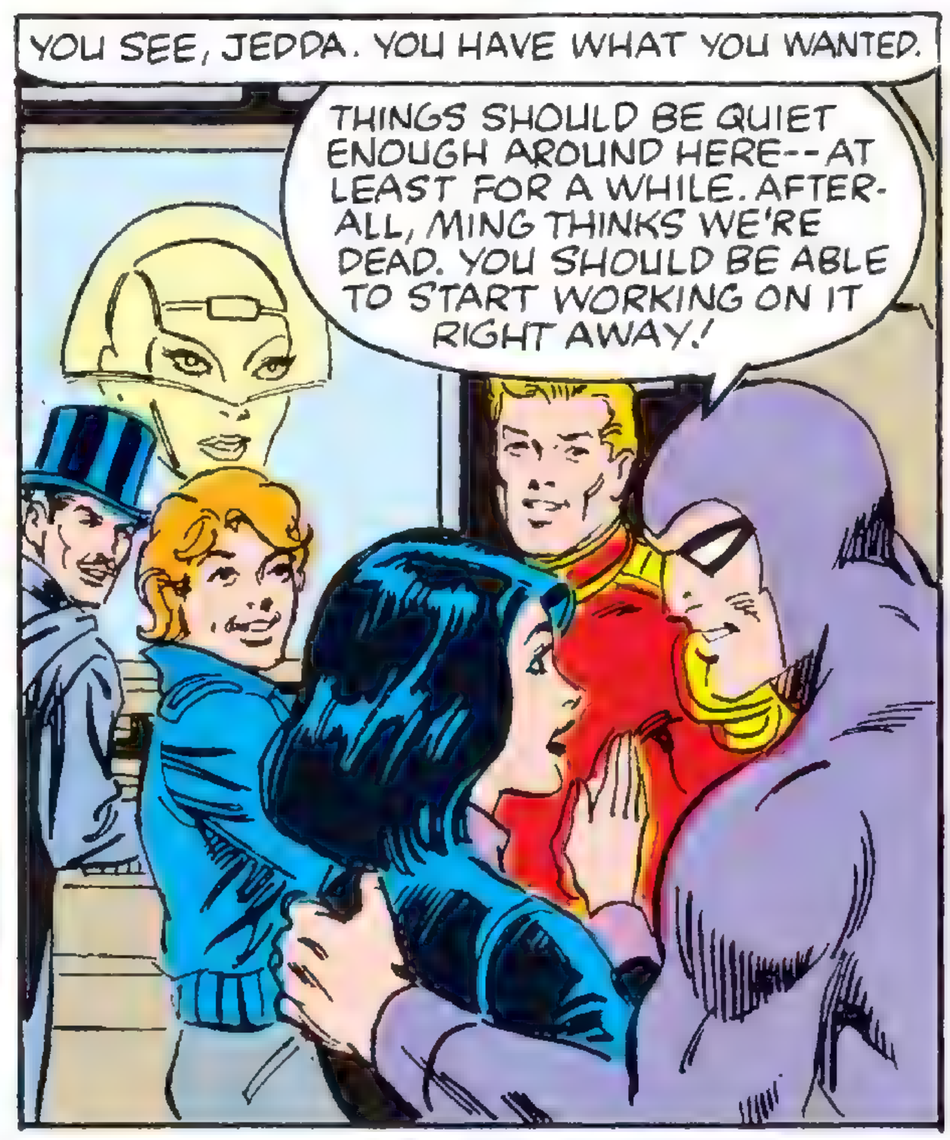

IT WORKED! WITH OUR NEW SHIELDS UP THEY DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE WERE HERE! EVERYTHING WORKED OUT JUST RIGHT.

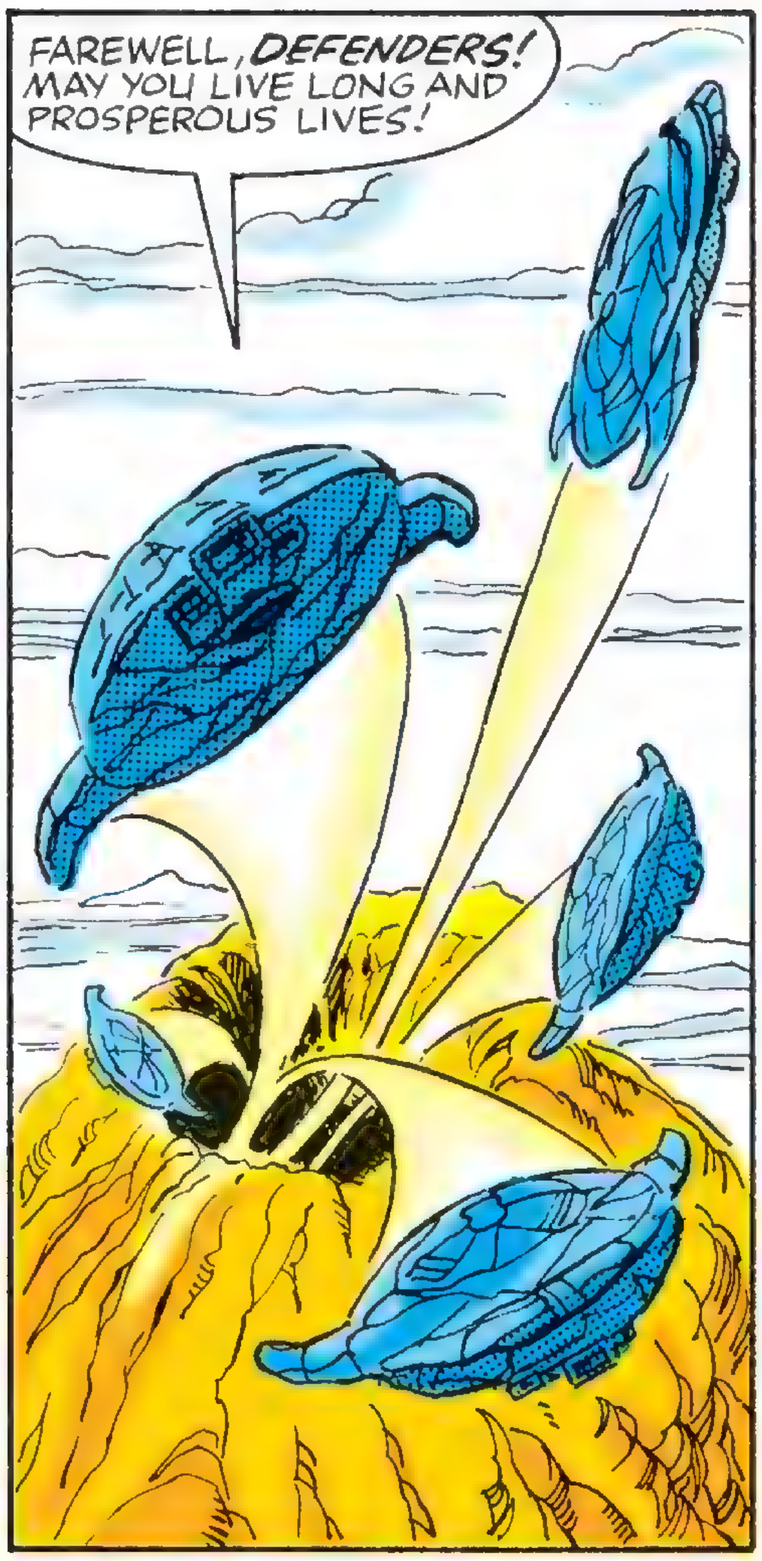

I'M AFRAID THAT ISN'T QUITE SO. LOOK AT THE CONDITION OF MY MANSION. IT'S A SHAMBLES! IT COULD TAKE YEARS TO RESTORE IT!
PERHAPS, MANDRAKE, IT IS TIME FOR US TO BEGIN LOOKING UPON MONITOR AS OUR HOME MORE THAN OUR HEADQUARTERS. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE ALL GOING TO BE LIVING HERE.

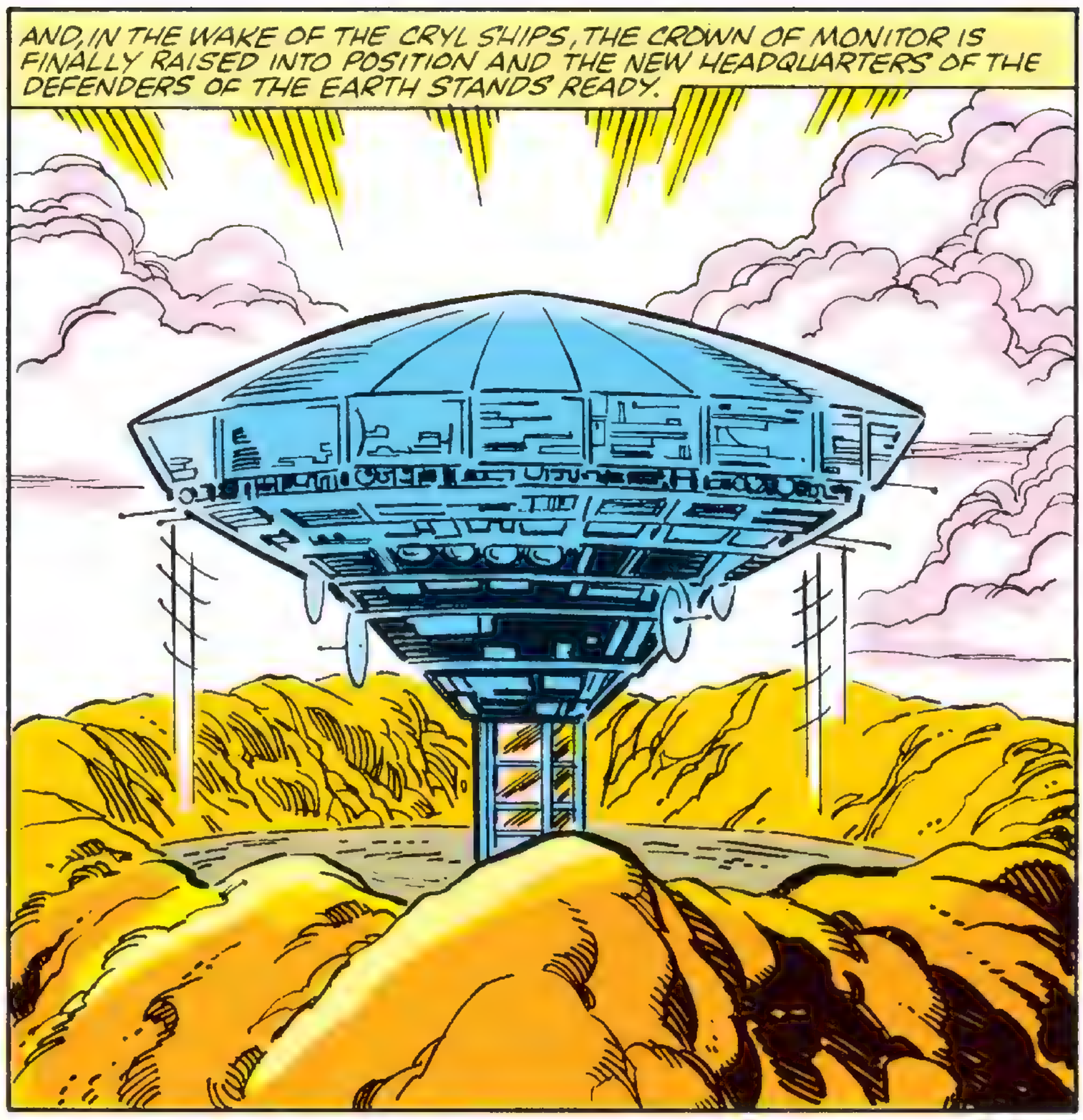

BUT MY HOME IS NOTHING LIKE THIS. HOW AM I GOING TO BE COMFORTABLE HERE?

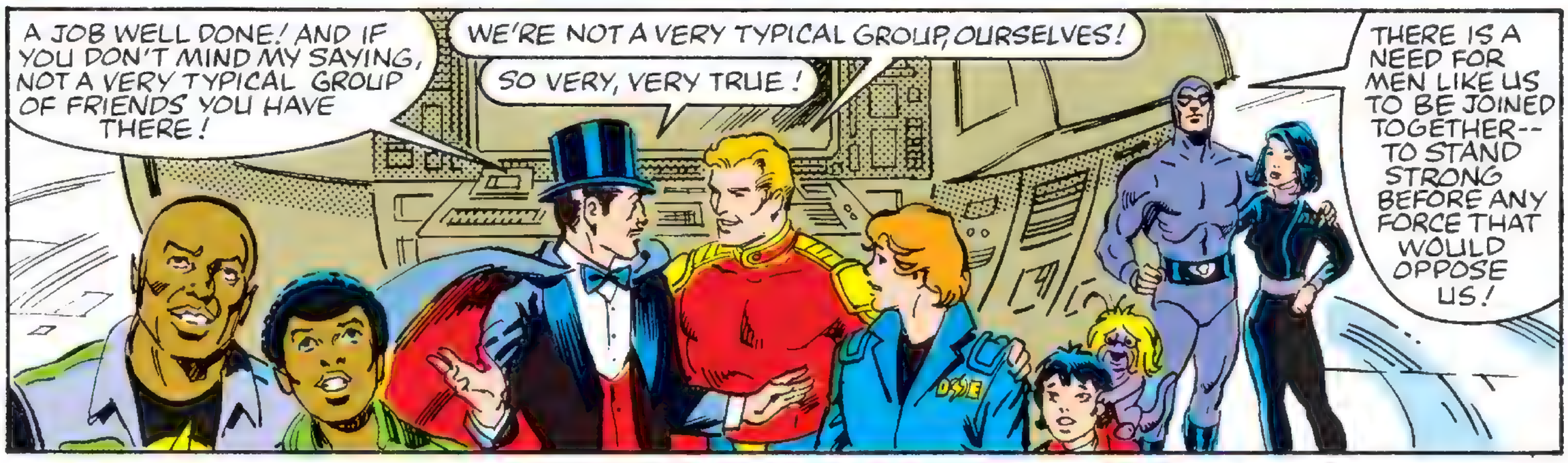
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL... AND I CANNOT ANSWER THAT QUESTION FOR YOU. BUT, YOU MUST TRUST THAT EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT IN THE END.
INDEED, IT WILL, PHANTOM.
WHAT IS IT DYNAK?


IT SEEMS THAT WHEN THE BOMB YOU PLANTED EXPLODED IT OPENED UP A RATHER LARGE CAVERN AREA--ONE IN WHICH JEDDA COULD CREATE A SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT AND FEEL AT HOME.
AS A RESULT OF THE GEO-THERMIC TEMPERATURE, THE CLIMATE WILL NATURALLY SIMULATE THAT OF YOUR HOMELAND IN AFRICA.

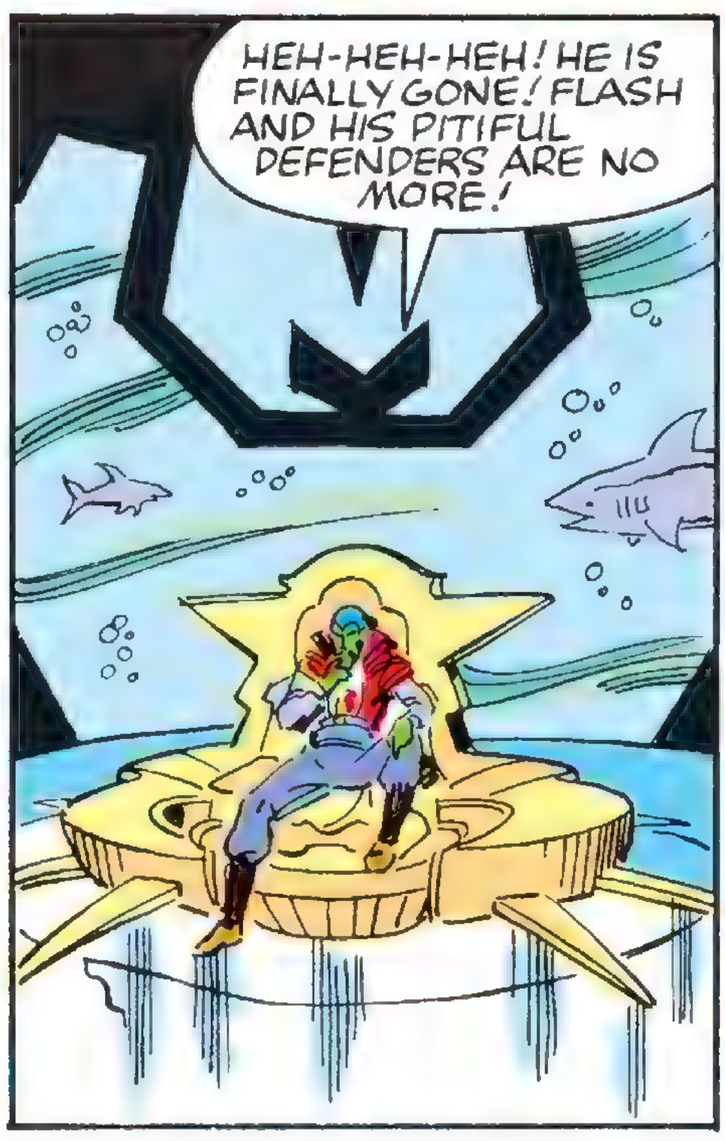

YOU SEE, JEDDA. YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WANTED.
THINGS SHOULD BE QUIET ENOUGH AROUND HERE--AT LEAST FOR A WHILE. AFTER-ALL, MING THINKS WE'RE DEAD. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO START WORKING ON IT RIGHT AWAY!


FAREWELL, DEFENDERS! MAY YOU LIVE LONG AND PROSPEROUS LIVES!


AND, IN THE WAKE OF THE CRYL SHIPS, THE CROWN OF MONITOR IS FINALLY RAISED INTO POSITION AND THE NEW HEADQUARTERS OF THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH STANDS READY.


A JOB WELL DONE! AND IF YOU DON'T MIND MY SAYING, NOT A VERY TYPICAL GROUP OF FRIENDS YOU HAVE THERE!
WE'RE NOT A VERY TYPICAL GROUP, OURSELVES!
SO VERY, VERY TRUE!
THERE IS A NEED FOR MEN LIKE US TO BE JOINED TOGETHER-- TO STAND STRONG BEFORE ANY FORCE THAT WOULD OPPOSE US!

OUR JOB WILL NOT BE DONE UNTIL THE EARTH IS NO LONGER THREATENED BY FORCES THAT WOULD SUBJUGATE HUMANITY. LET US NOT FORGET THAT MING IS STILL OUT THERE. THERE CAN BE NO REST UNTIL HE IS FINALLY ELIMINATED! HE MUST BE DEFEATED!


HEH-HEH-HEH! HE IS FINALLY GONE! FLASH AND HIS PITIFUL DEFENDERS ARE NO MORE!

THE TIME IS RIGHT! THE EARTH IS MINE FOR THE TAKING!

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DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH™
IT'S A RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE!
BROTHER VS. BROTHER
SAVIUK / FREDERICKS

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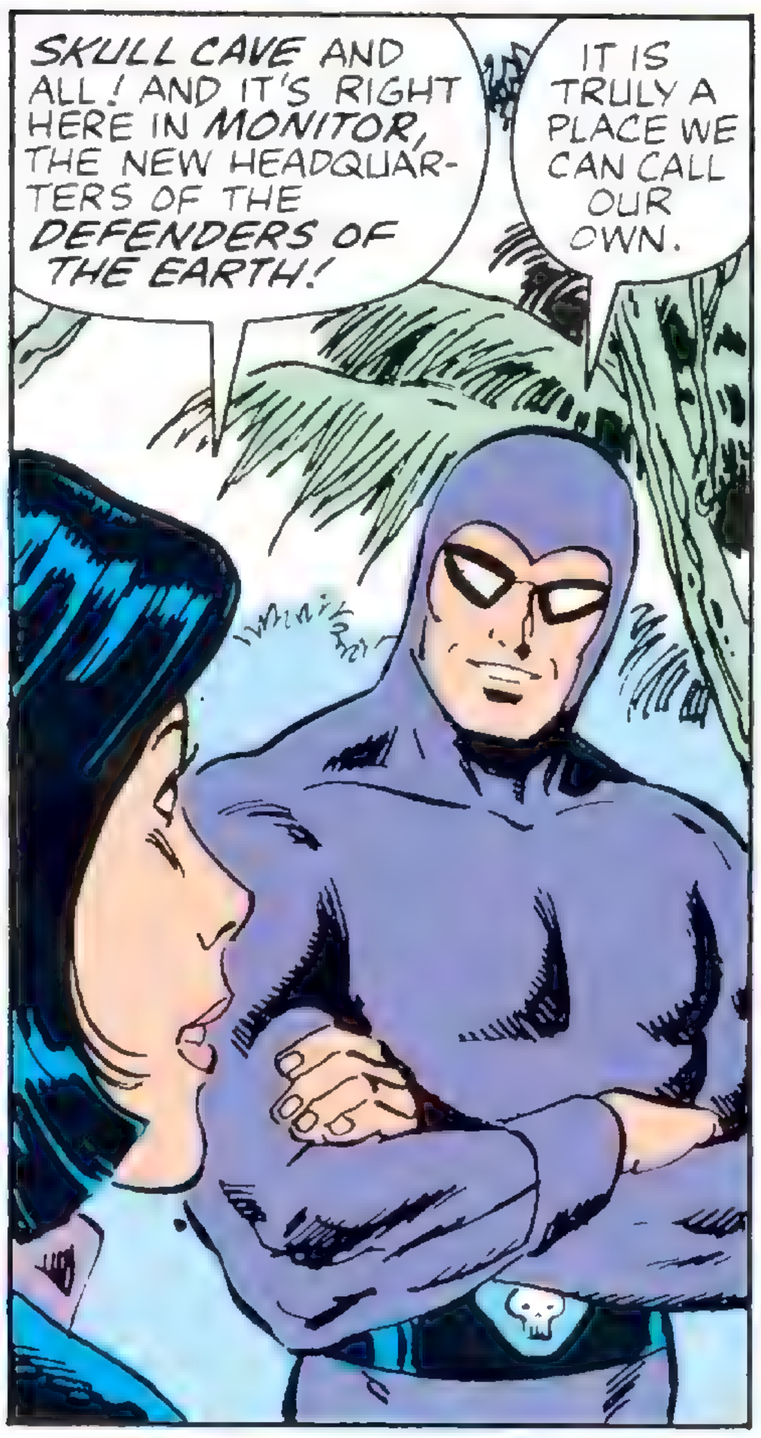
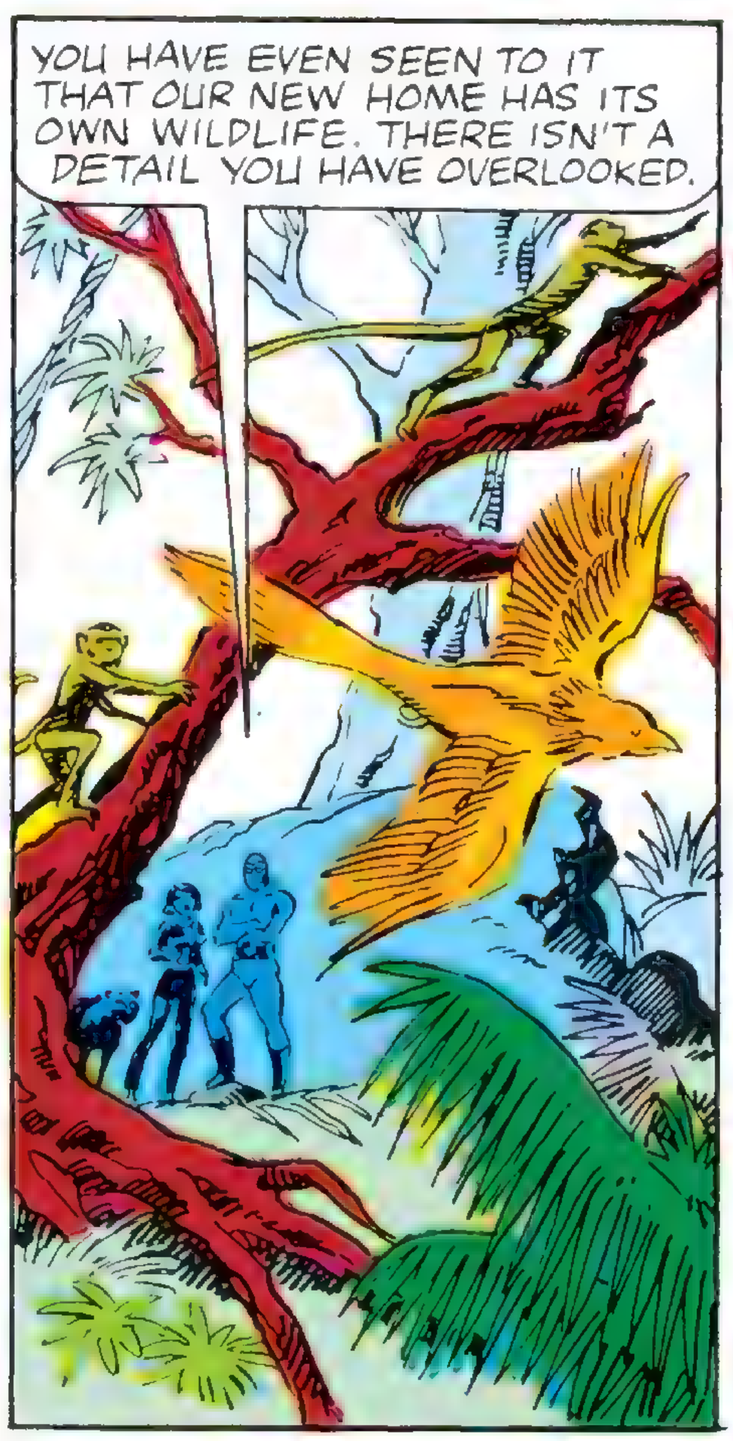
MICHAEL HIGGINS - WRITER
ALEX SAVIUK - PENCILER
FRED FREDERICKS - INKER
KEN LOPEZ - LETTERER
NEL YOMTOV - COLORIST
HOWARD MACKIE - EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO - EXECUTIVE EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER - EDITOR IN CHIEF
MOST IMPRESSIVE!
GRRRRRR

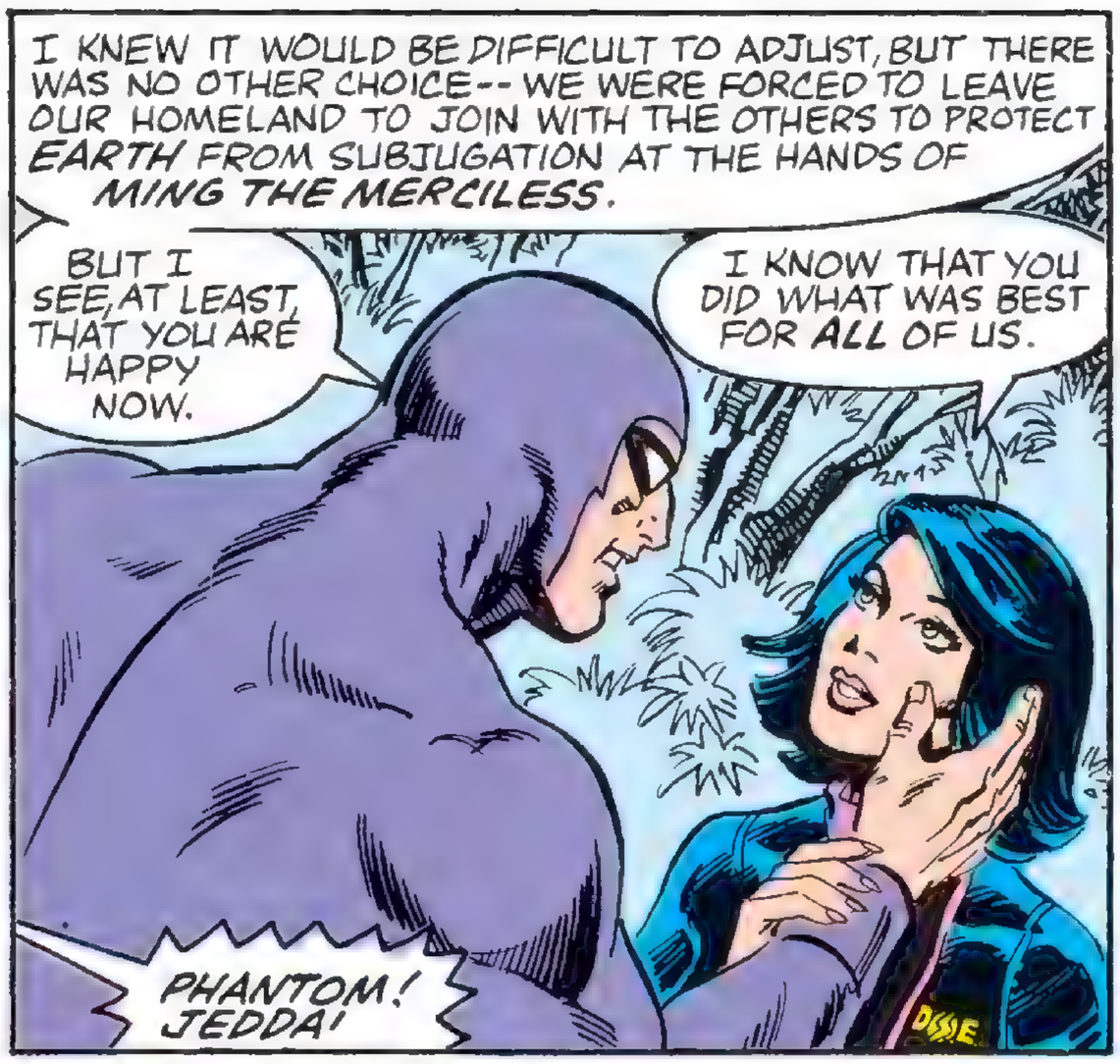
IT SEEMS *KISA* AGREES WITH YOU, FATHER...

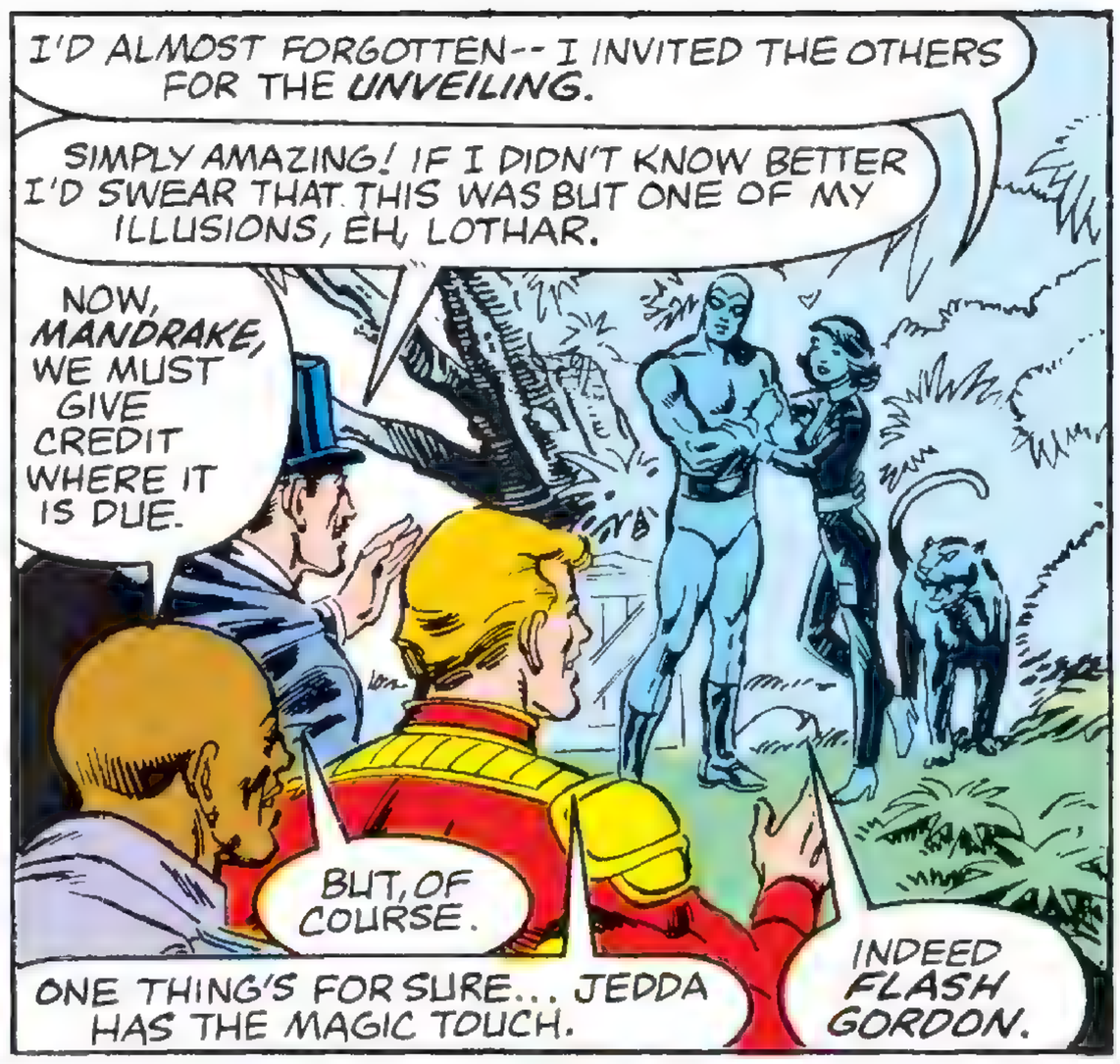
...AND, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF, I'M PROUD OF WHAT WE'VE DONE HERE!

YOU SHOULD BE, *JEDDA!* AFTERALL, YOU ARE THE ONE WHO DESIGNED THIS SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT SIMULATING OUR NATURAL SURROUNDINGS IN THE JUNGLES OF AFRICA!




I KNEW IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO ADJUST, BUT THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE-- WE WERE FORCED TO LEAVE OUR HOMELAND TO JOIN WITH THE OTHERS TO PROTECT EARTH FROM SUBJUGATION AT THE HANDS OF MING THE MERCILESS.
BUT I SEE, AT LEAST, THAT YOU ARE HAPPY NOW.
I KNOW THAT YOU DID WHAT WAS BEST FOR ALL OF US.
PHANTOM! JEDDA!

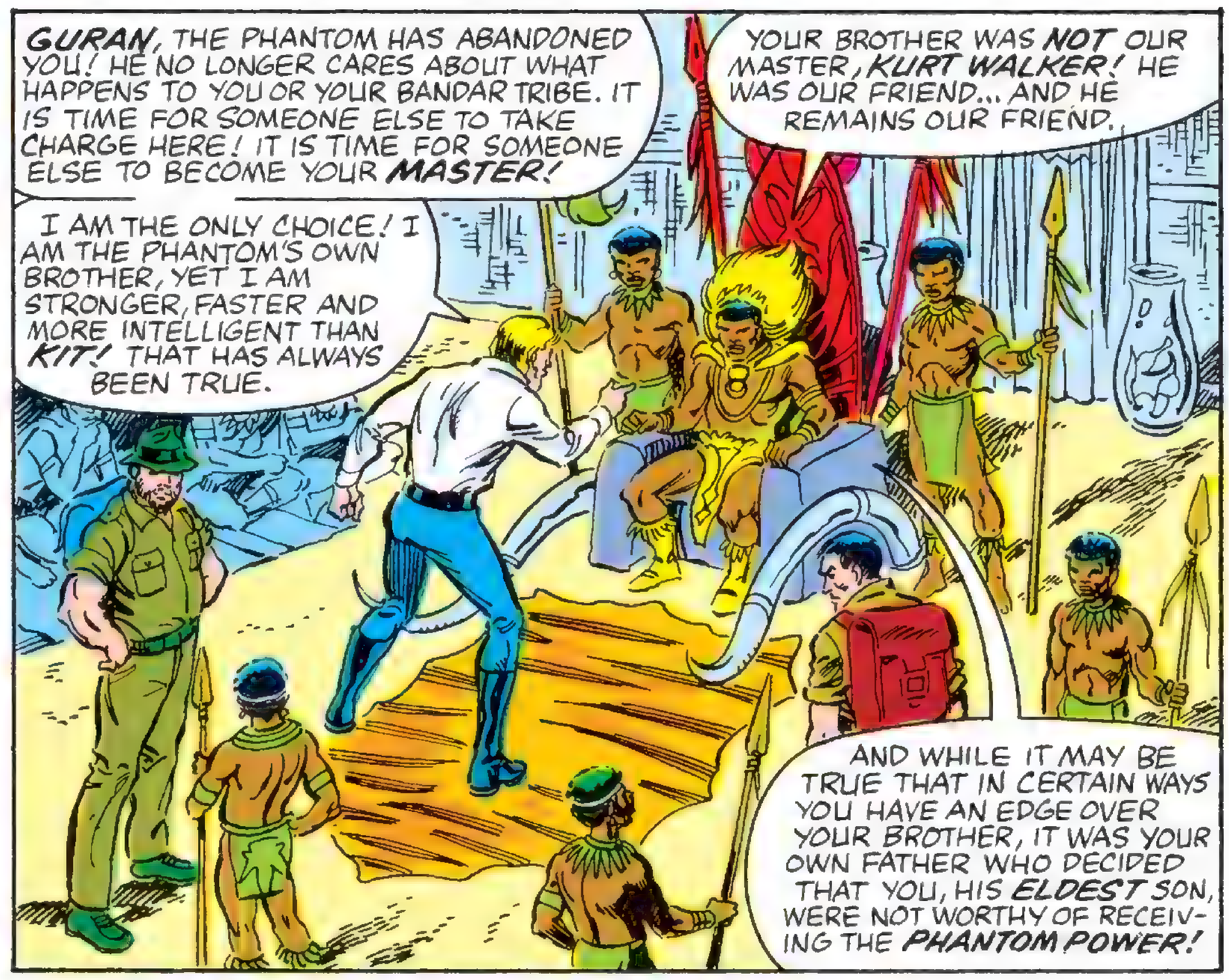

I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN-- I INVITED THE OTHERS FOR THE UNVEILING.
SIMPLY AMAZING! IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER I'D SWEAR THAT THIS WAS BUT ONE OF MY ILLUSIONS, EH, LOTHAR.
NOW, MANDRAKE, WE MUST GIVE CREDIT WHERE IT IS DUE.
BUT, OF COURSE.
ONE THING'S FOR SURE... JEDDA HAS THE MAGIC TOUCH.
INDEED FLASH GORDON.

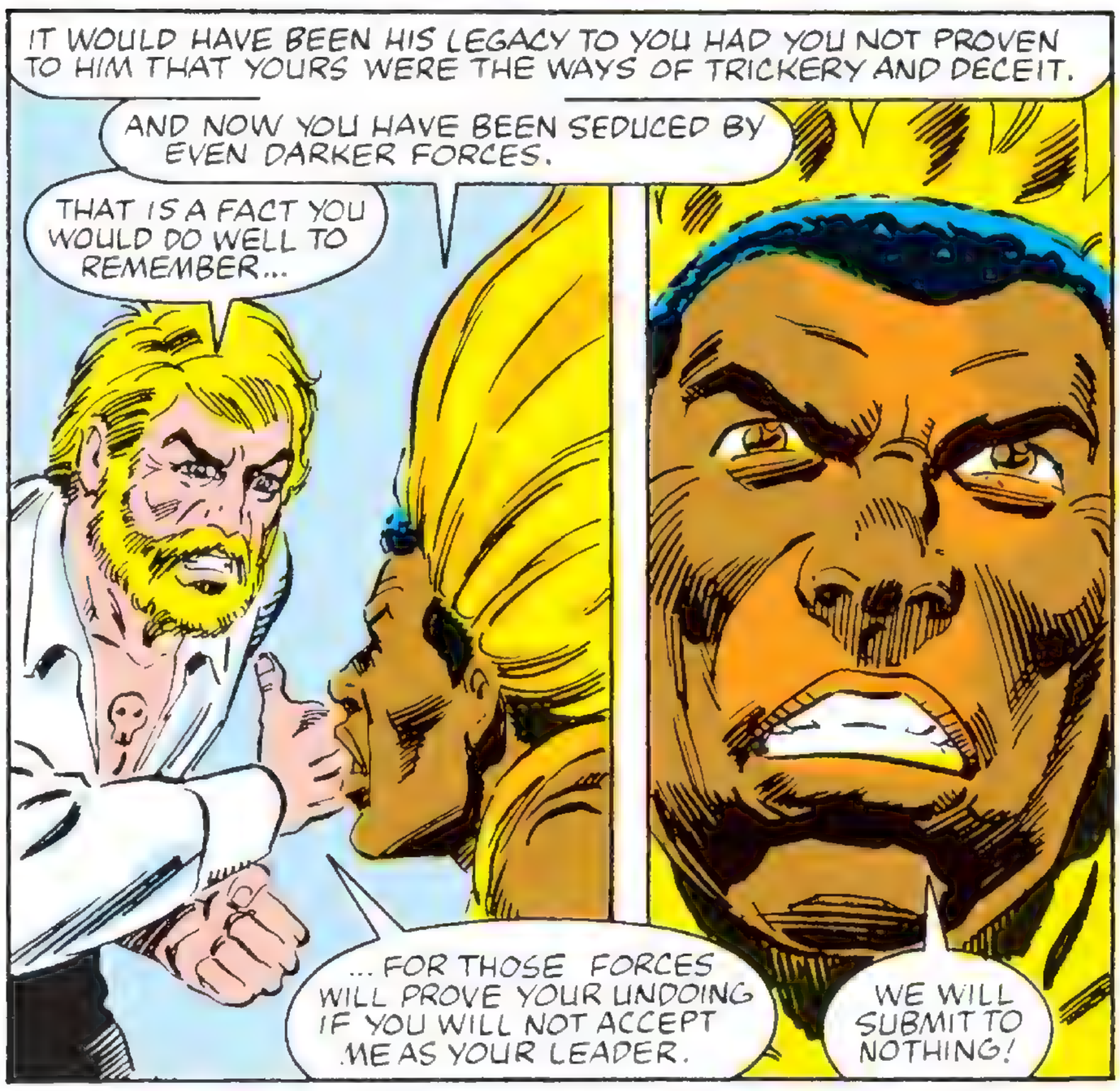
WOW, KSHIN, LOOK AT THAT!
IT-- IT IS BEAUTIFUL, L.J.
I KNEW YOU WERE TALENTED, JEDDA, BUT I NEVER EXPECTED THIS!
I FEEL JUST LIKE I'M IN AN OLD, OLD TARZAN MOVIE-- LIKE THE ONES WE SAW AT THE VIDEO MUSUEM. Y'KNOW, "ME TARZAN, YOU JANE."
YES, WE KNOW, RICK! AFTER ALL, WE HAVE A FEW YEARS ON YOU YOUNGSTERS!
YOUR FATHER IS QUITE CORRECT.

I CAN'T GET OVER IT! IT LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE THE AREA NEAR THE BANDAR VILLAGE IN YOUR NATIVE AFRICA...
... WHERE WE FIRST ENLISTED YOUR AID.

HMMMM.
I WONDER HOW THINGS ARE GOING WITH THE BANDAR NATIVES NOW THAT I AM DEVOTING MY ATTENTION TO THE DEFENDERS' CAUSE.
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT I AM SUDDENLY CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR WELFARE--THEIR SAFETY!

" IT IS PROBABLY NOTHING. I AM SURE THE BANDAR CAN TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN AFFAIRS!"


GURAN, THE PHANTOM HAS ABANDONED YOU! HE NO LONGER CARES ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU OR YOUR BANDAR TRIBE. IT IS TIME FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO TAKE CHARGE HERE! IT IS TIME FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO BECOME YOUR MASTER!
YOUR BROTHER WAS NOT OUR MASTER, KURT WALKER! HE WAS OUR FRIEND... AND HE REMAINS OUR FRIEND.
I AM THE ONLY CHOICE! I AM THE PHANTOM'S OWN BROTHER, YET I AM STRONGER, FASTER AND MORE INTELLIGENT THAN KIT! THAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN TRUE.
AND WHILE IT MAY BE TRUE THAT IN CERTAIN WAYS YOU HAVE AN EDGE OVER YOUR BROTHER, IT WAS YOUR OWN FATHER WHO DECIDED THAT YOU, HIS ELDEST SON, WERE NOT WORTHY OF RECEIVING THE PHANTOM POWER!

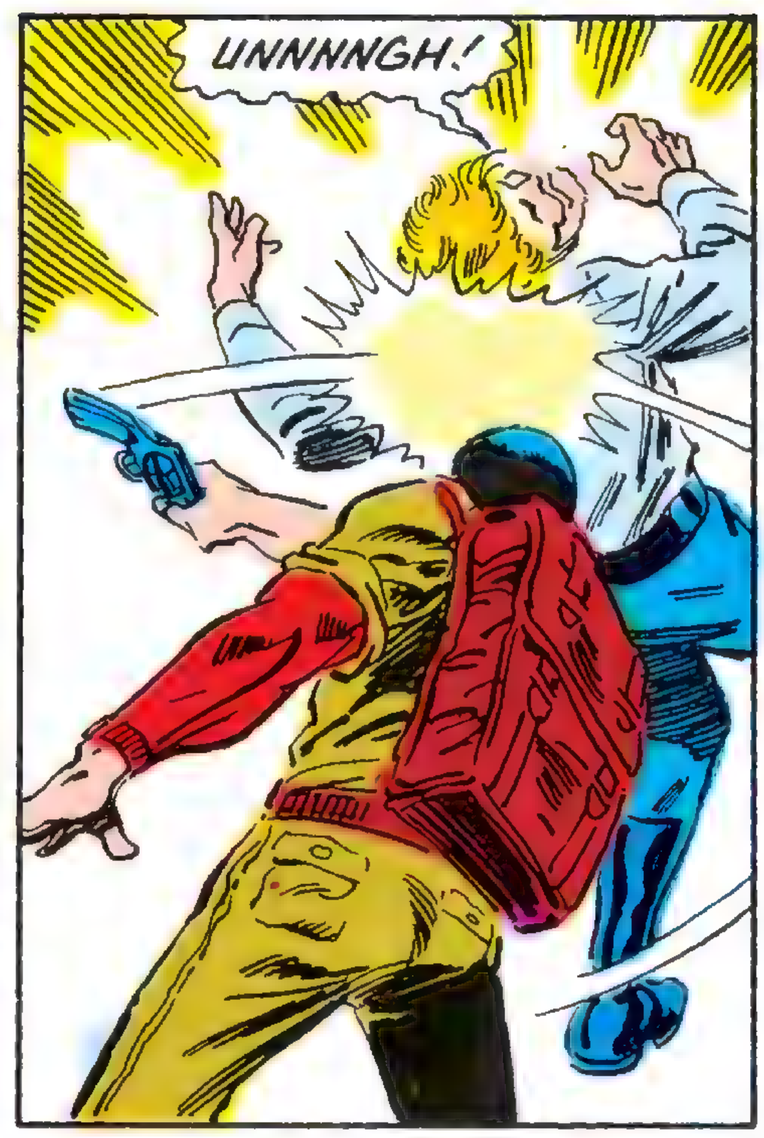

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HIS LEGACY TO YOU HAD YOU NOT PROVEN TO HIM THAT YOURS WERE THE WAYS OF TRICKERY AND DECEIT.
AND NOW YOU HAVE BEEN SEDUCED BY EVEN DARKER FORCES.
THAT IS A FACT YOU WOULD DO WELL TO REMEMBER...
... FOR THOSE FORCES WILL PROVE YOUR UNDOING IF YOU WILL NOT ACCEPT ME AS YOUR LEADER.
WE WILL SUBMIT TO NOTHING!

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS PRESENT NO THREAT TO US, KURT WALKER.
YOU ARE HOPELESSLY OUTNUMBERED. IT IS TIME YOU TOOK LEAVE OF OUR VILLAGE.

DID YOU SEE THE DOORWAY BEHIND GURAN? THAT IS WHERE THE JEWELS ARE HIDDEN, AND, ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THE SACRED MAGIC STONES OF THE BANDAR ELDERS AS WELL!
OH, RIGHT! MAGIC STONES!
YOU CAN HAVE AS MANY OF THOSE AS YOU WANT. I'LL TAKE THE JEWELS.
WE'LL TAKE THE JEWELS.
YEAH, RIGHT! SAY, KURT, YOU TALKED UP A STORM BACK THERE... TALKED REAL BIG, BUT IT DIDN'T AMOUNT TO A HILL OF BEANS!

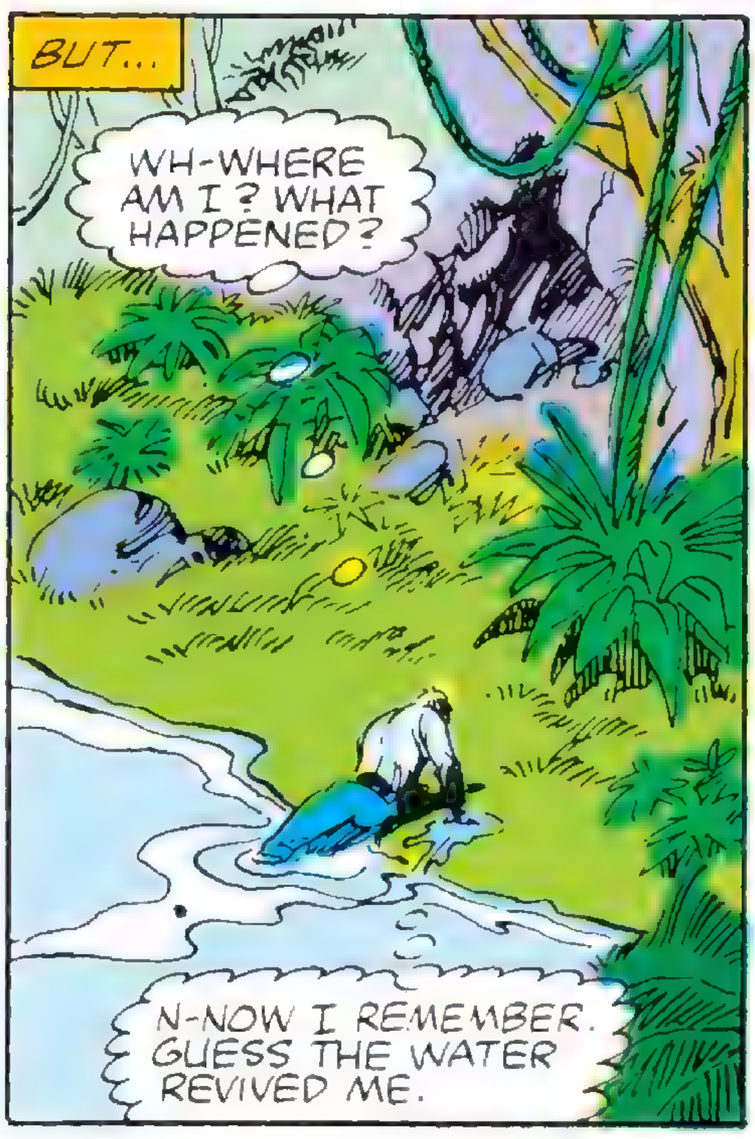
THEY SAW RIGHT THROUGH YOU AND YOUR PHONY HOCUS-POCUS ACT.
DON'T SEEM LIKE YOU'RE GOOD FOR ALL THAT MUCH AROUND HERE. NOT MUCH AT ALL.

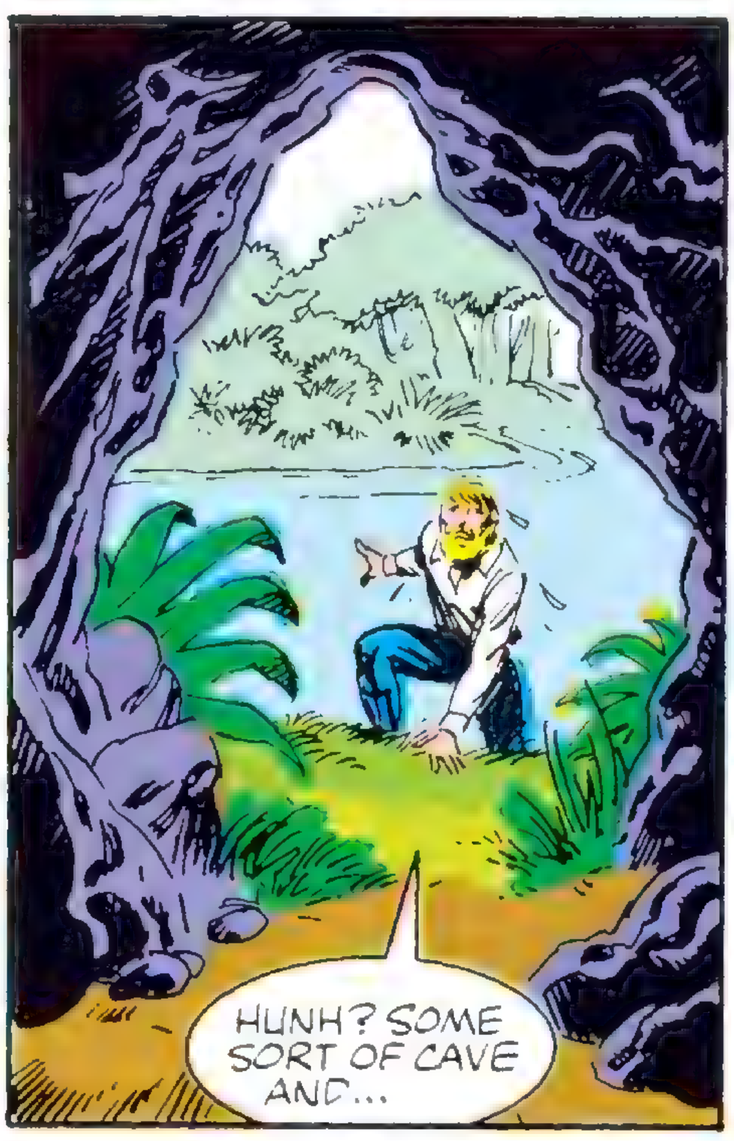
YOU'LL SEE JUST WHAT I'M GOOD F--

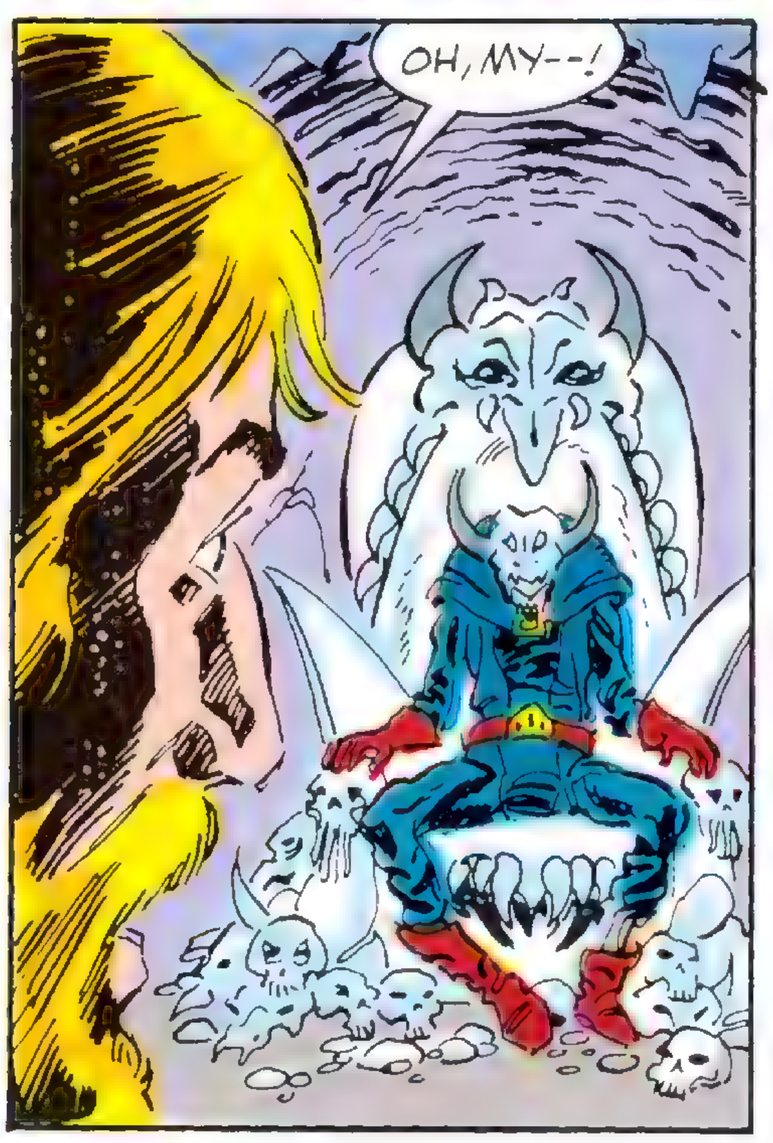

UNNNGH!

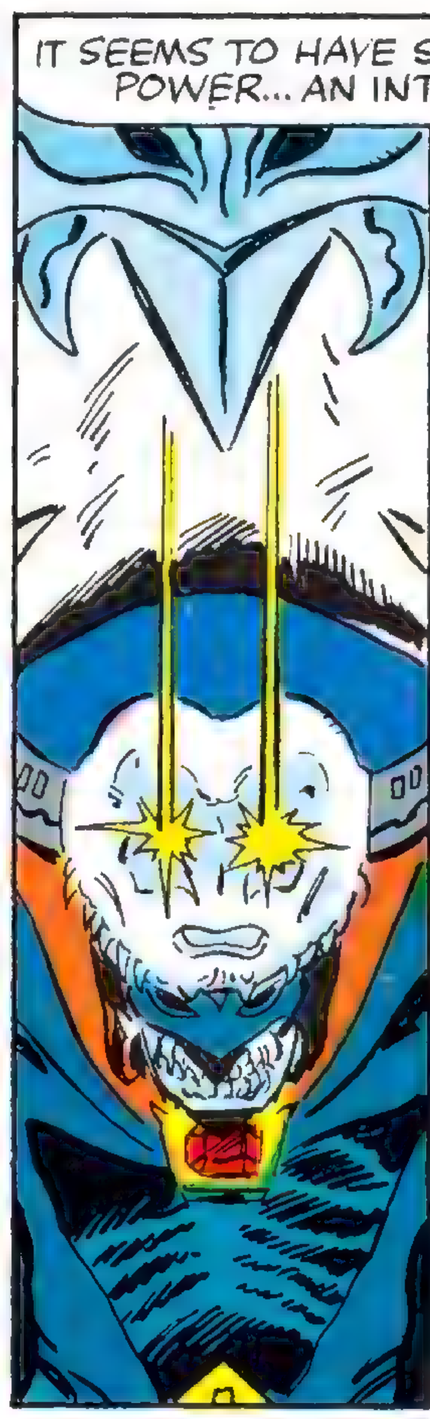
SO LONG SUCKER!

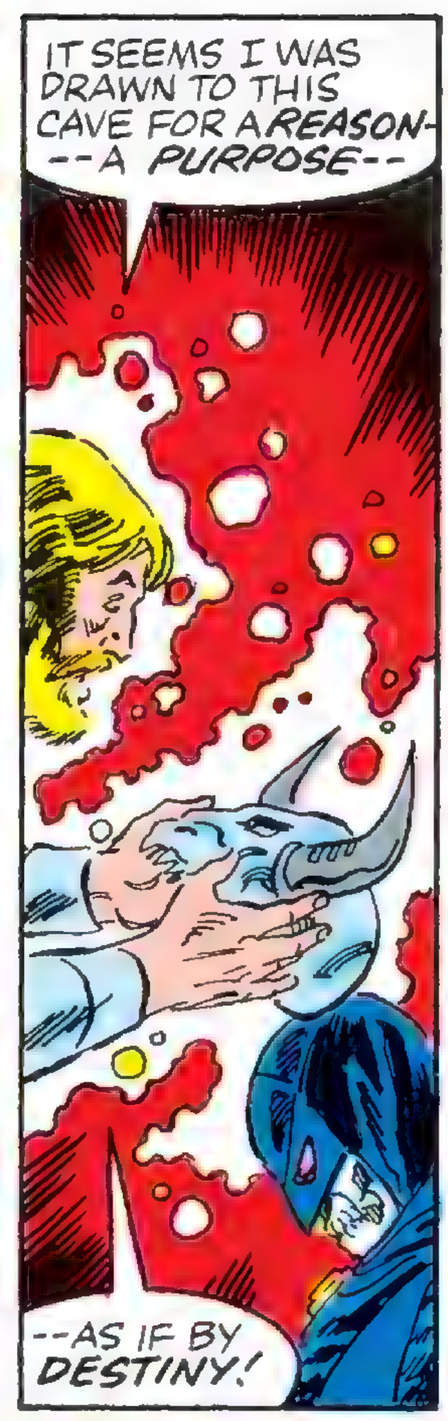
NOW THAT YOU SHOWED US WHERE THE JEWELS ARE WE DON'T NEED YOU ANYMORE.
GOOD RIDDANCE! I THINK I'M GONNA LIKE YOU BETTER AS A DEAD MAN!

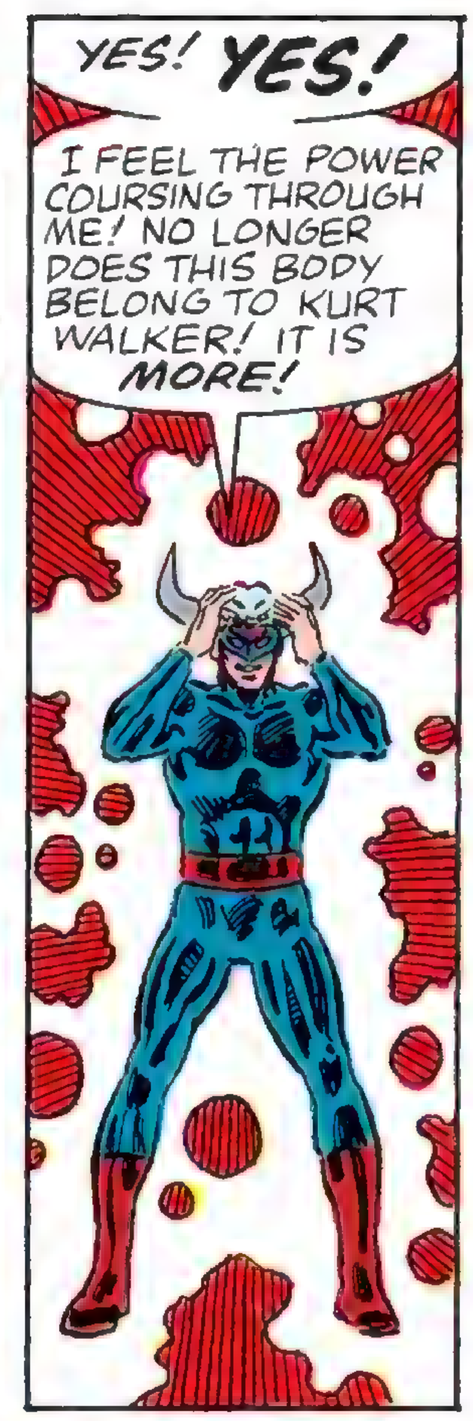

BUT...
WH-WHERE AM I? WHAT HAPPENED?
N-NOW I REMEMBER. GUESS THE WATER REVIVED ME.


HUNH? SOME SORT OF CAVE AND...


OH, MY--!

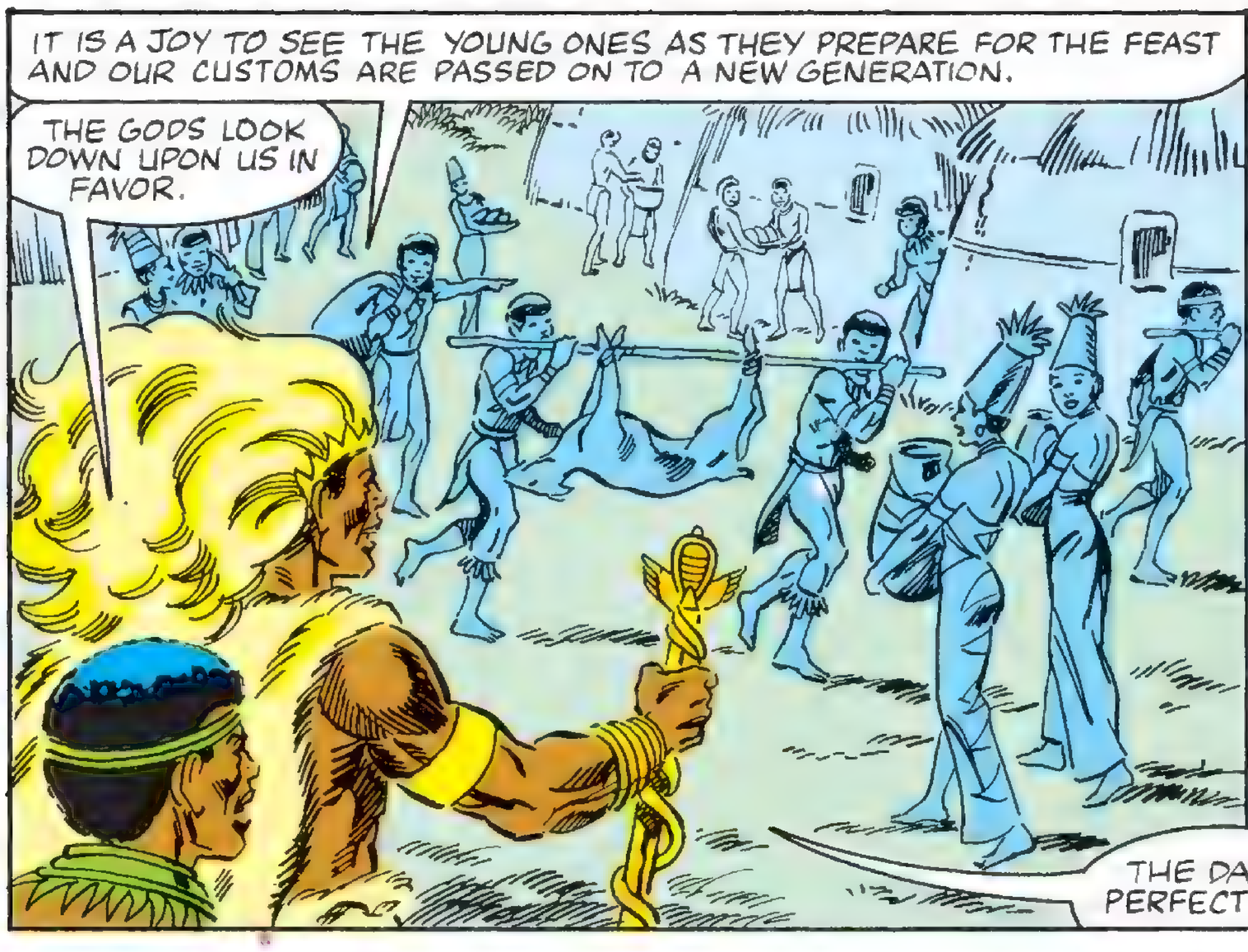


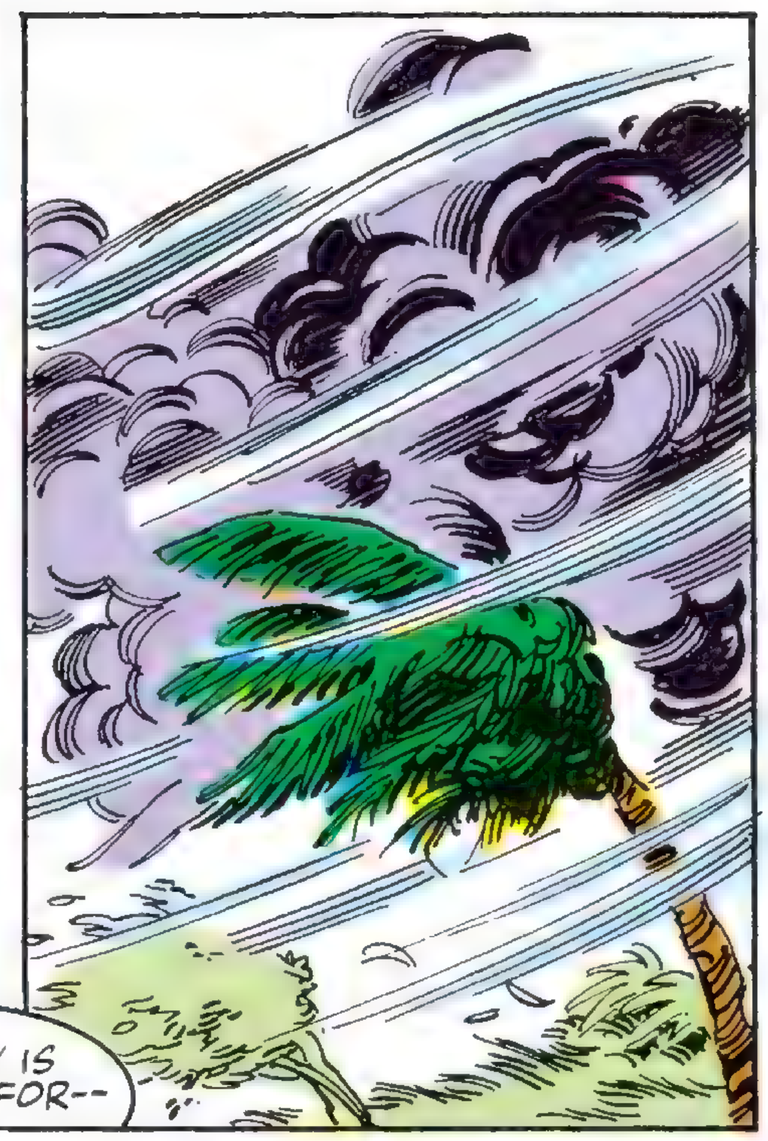



N'DAMA IS REBORN!!

IT IS TIME FOR HIM TO SEEK HIS VENGEANCE!

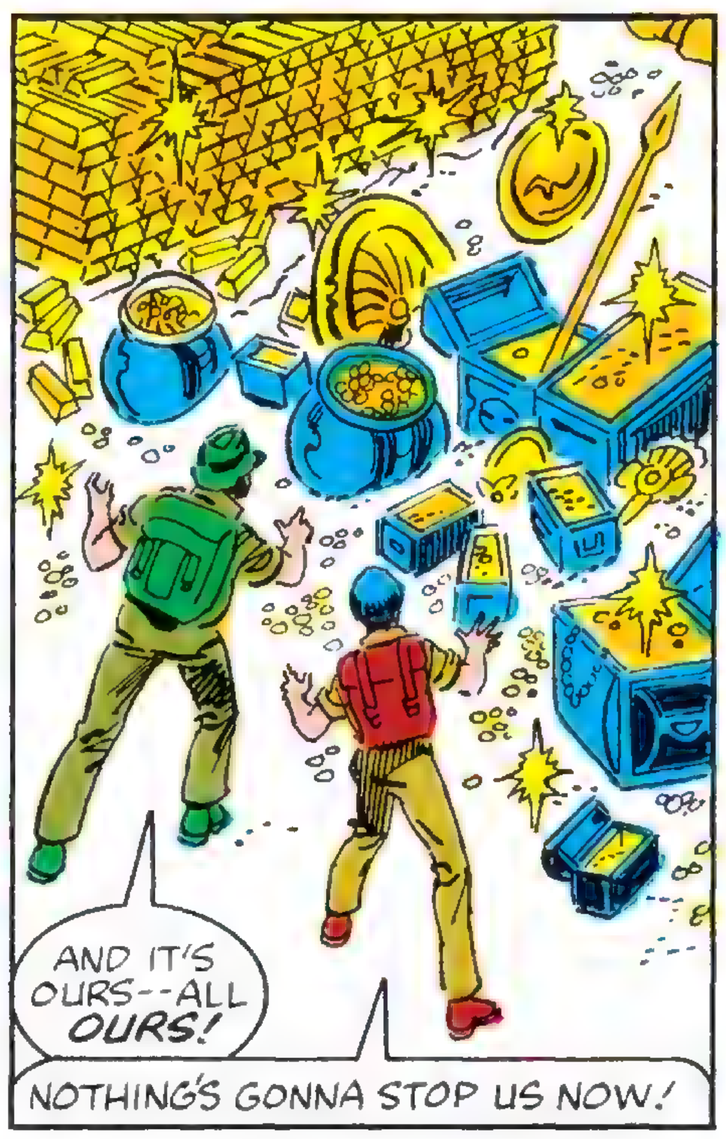

IT IS A JOY TO SEE THE YOUNG ONES AS THEY PREPARE FOR THE FEAST AND OUR CUSTOMS ARE PASSED ON TO A NEW GENERATION.
THE GODS LOOK DOWN UPON US IN FAVOR.
THE DAY IS PERFECT FOR--



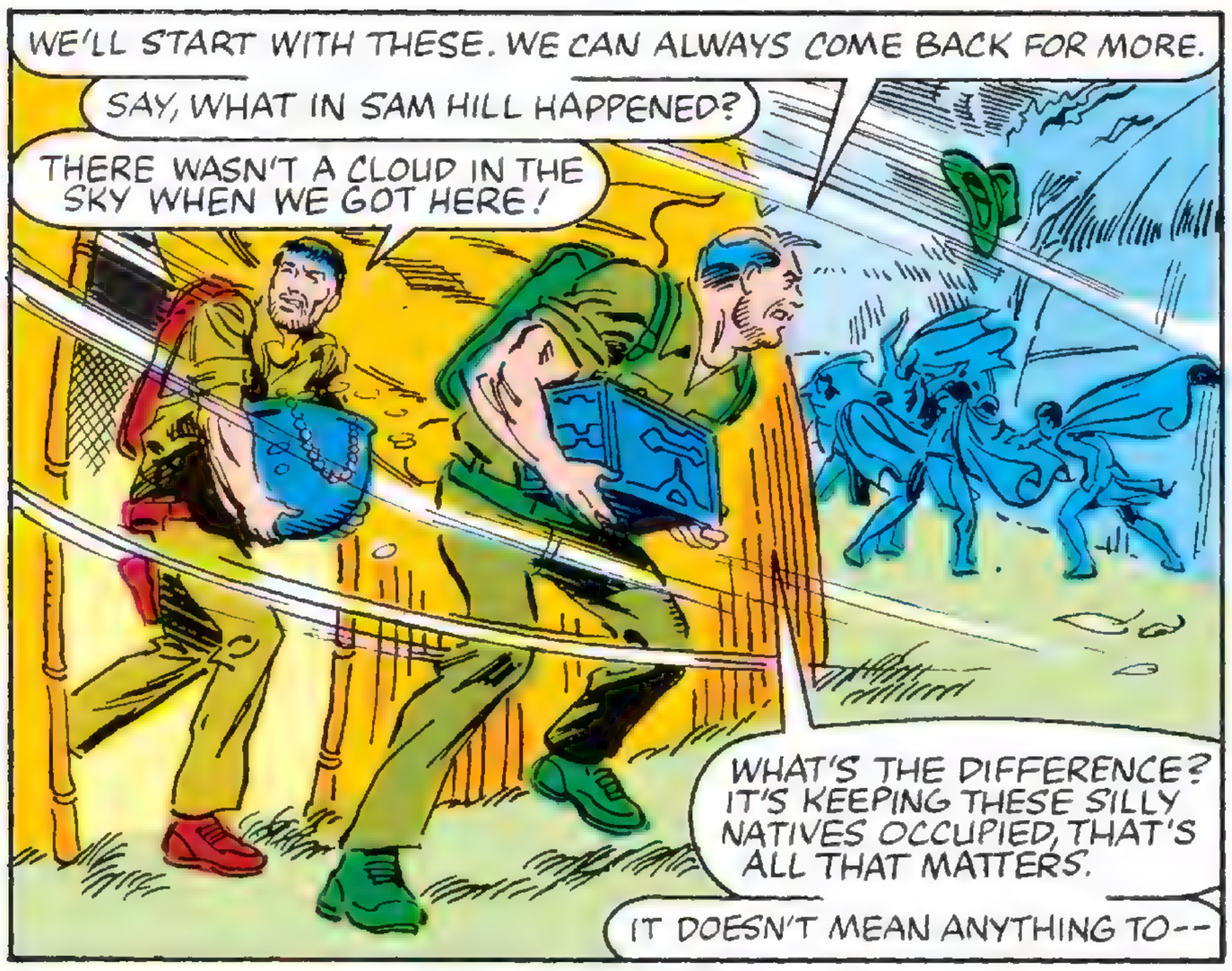
EH? WHAT IS THIS?! THE SKY HAS DARKENED AND A FIERCE STORM IS UPON US!
HOW CAN THIS BE?
THERE IS GREAT EVIL, GURAN-- AN EVIL BEYOND COMPREHENSION.

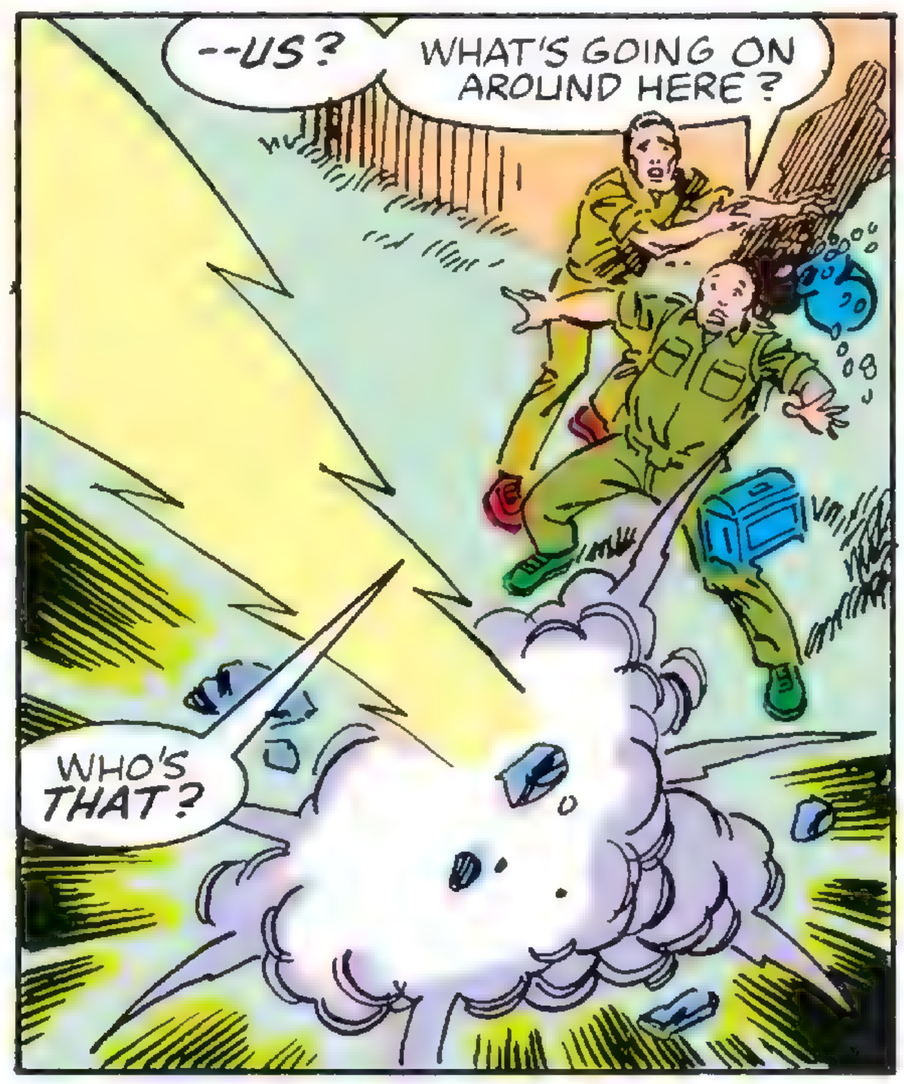
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THESE JUNGLE MEN. WE WON'T BE HEARING ANOTHER PEEP OUT OF THEM.
NOW CHECK BEHIND THOSE CURTAINS. THAT'S WHERE WALKER SAID THE BANDAR KEEP THE JEWELS.
CRACK
HAR-HAR! LIKE STEALIN' CANDY FROM A BABY.

JUMPIN' JEHOSOPHAT! WILL YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THIS?
I'M LOOKIN'! I'M LOOKIN'!
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

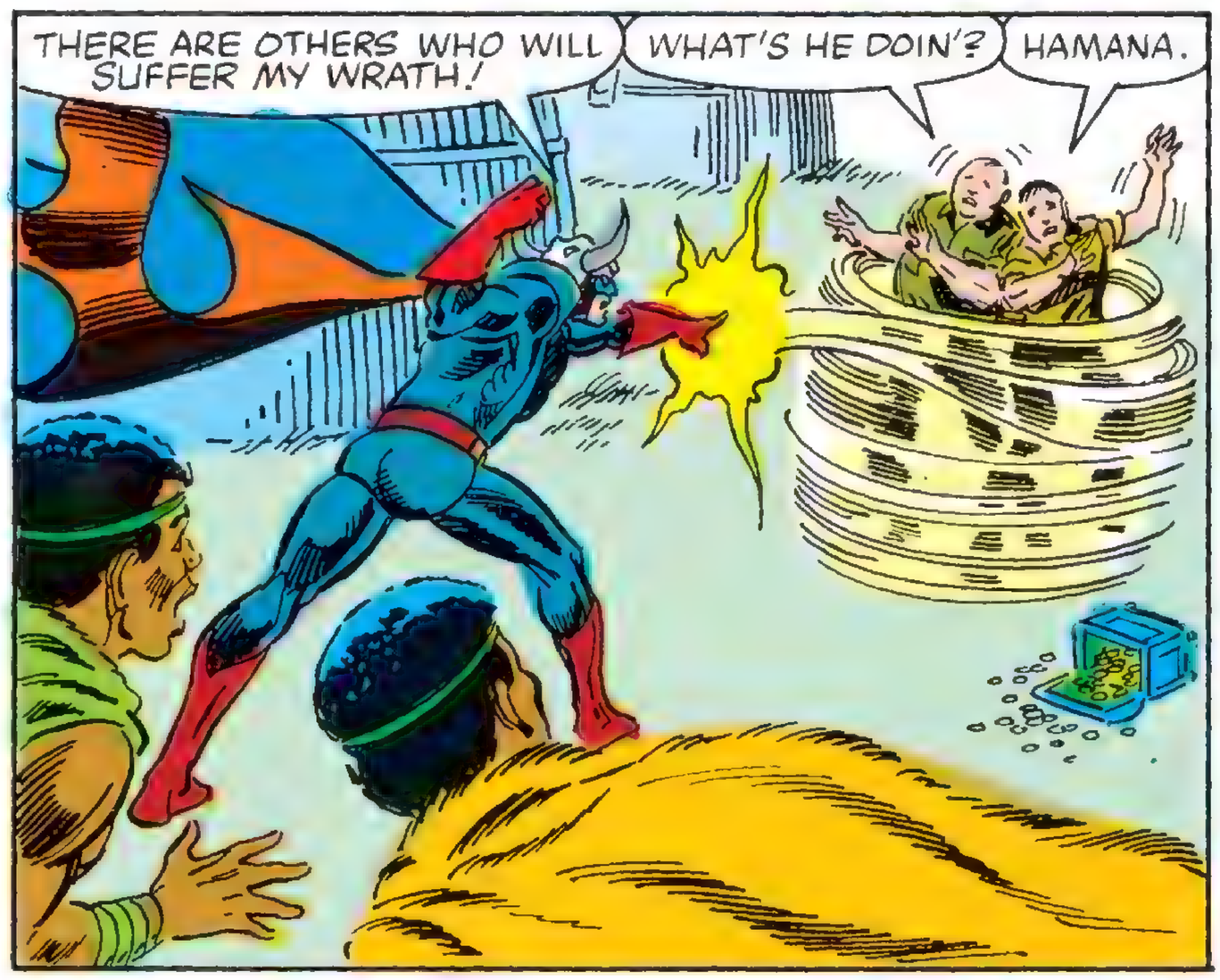

AND IT'S OURS--ALL OURS!
NOTHING'S GONNA STOP US NOW!

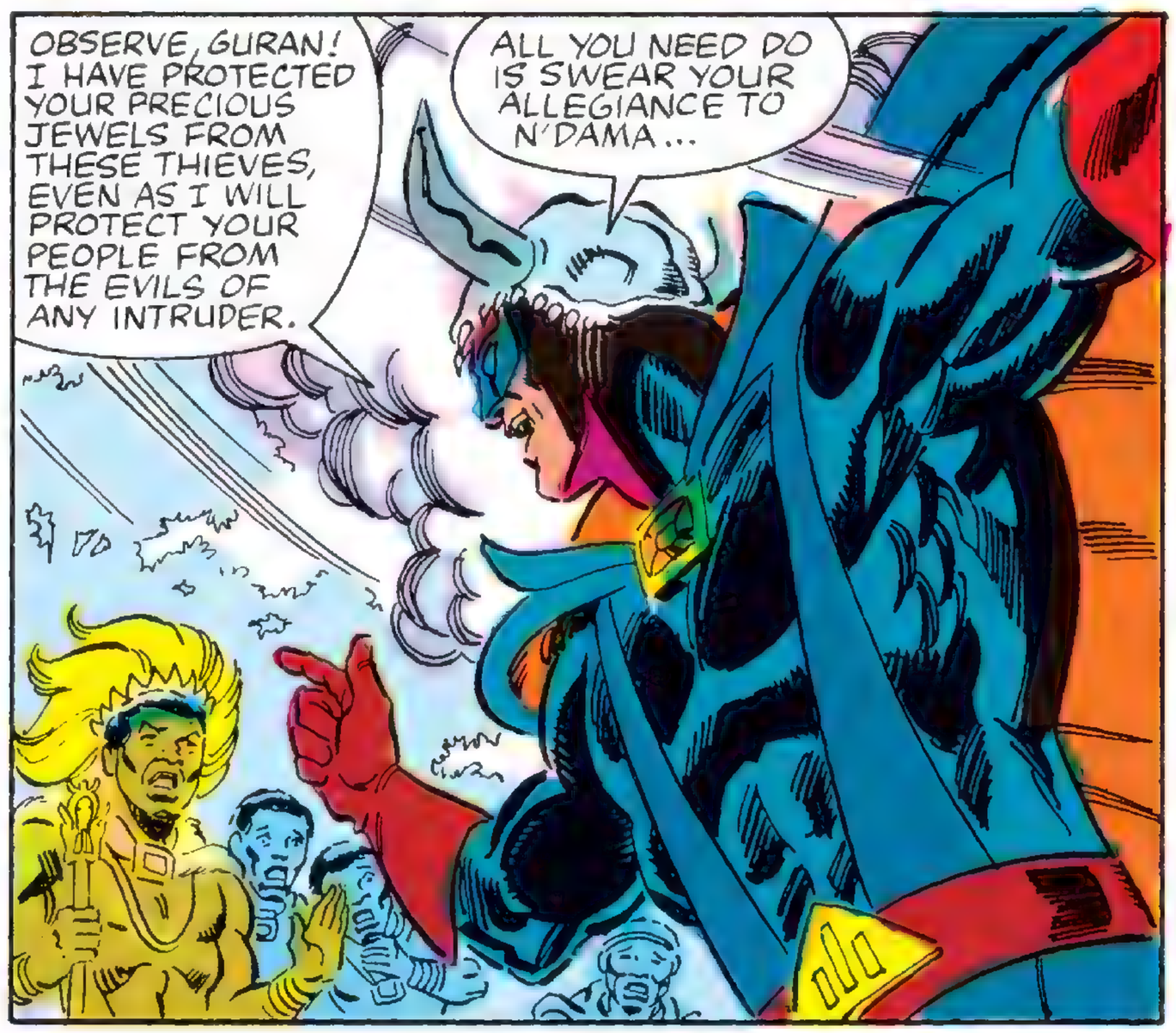
NATURE ITSELF HAS TURNED AGAINST US!
THE CHILL OF DEATH IS IN THE AIR!


WE'LL START WITH THESE. WE CAN ALWAYS COME BACK FOR MORE.
SAY, WHAT IN SAM HILL HAPPENED?
THERE WASN'T A CLOUD IN THE SKY WHEN WE GOT HERE!
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? IT'S KEEPING THESE SILLY NATIVES OCCUPIED, THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS.
IT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO--

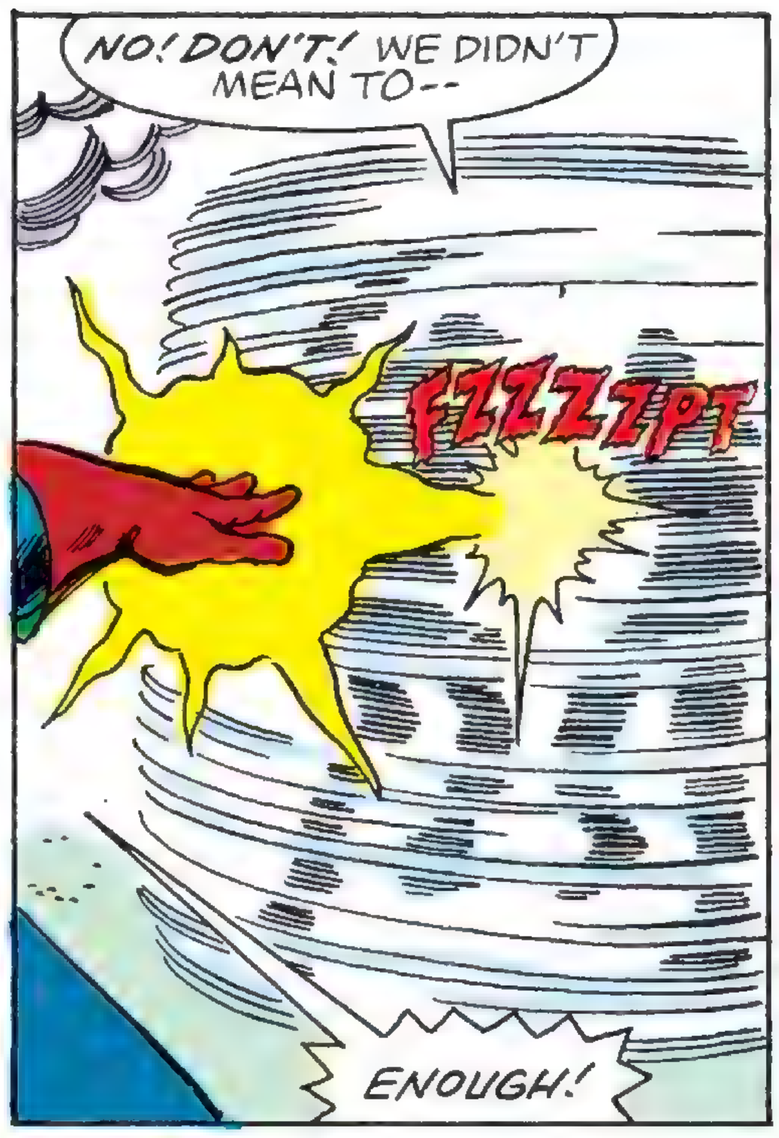

--US?
WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE?
WHO'S THAT?

THE WEATHER-DEMON HIMSELF HAS APPEARED! RUN! RUN!
THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE BANDAR TO FEAR ME.


THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WILL SUFFER MY WRATH!
WHAT'S HE DOIN'?
HAMANA.


OBSERVE, GURAN! I HAVE PROTECTED YOUR PRECIOUS JEWELS FROM THESE THIEVES, EVEN AS I WILL PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE FROM THE EVILS OF ANY INTRUDER.
ALL YOU NEED DO IS SWEAR YOUR ALLEGIANCE TO N'DAMA...

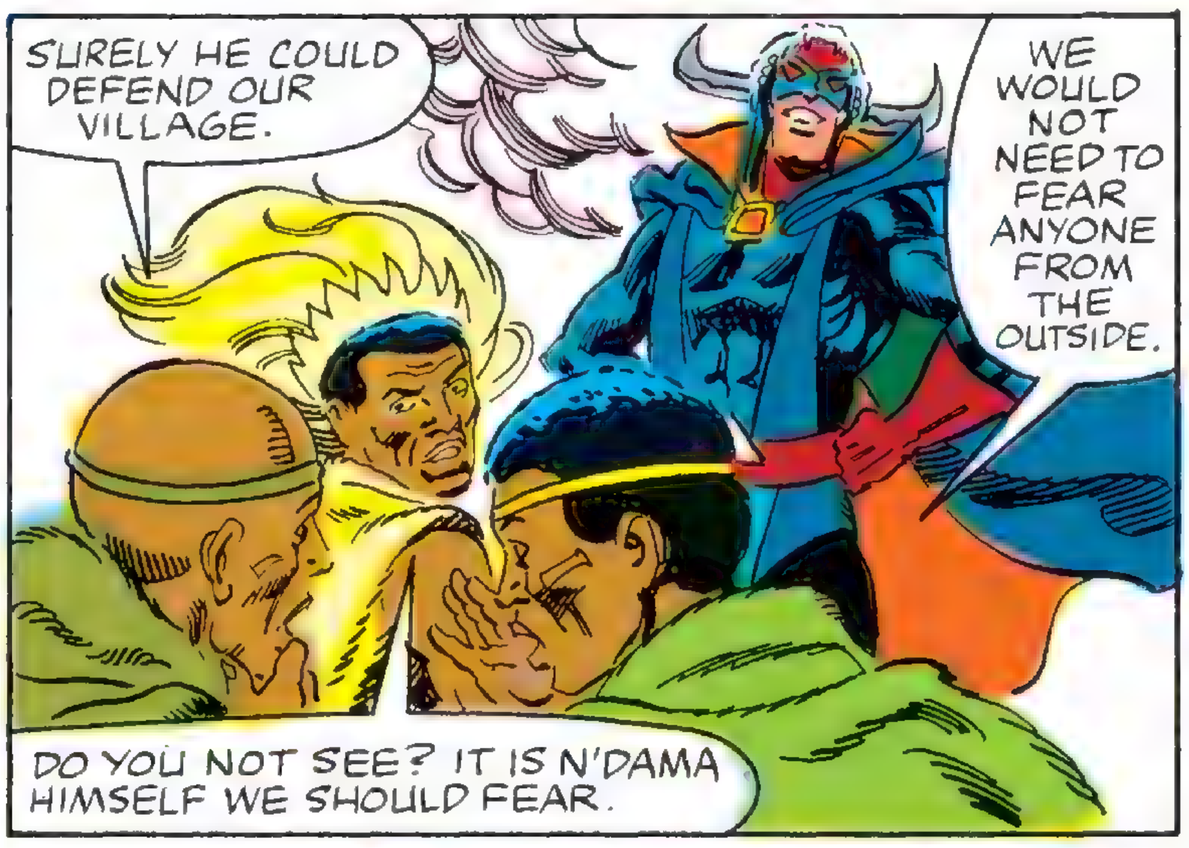
...OR SUFFER THE FATE THAT AWAITS EACH OF MY ENEMIES!


NO! DON'T! WE DIDN'T MEAN TO--
FZZZZPT
ENOUGH!

THEY WILL TROUBLE US NO MORE!

NOW I AM MASTER HERE! I AM YOUR RULER!
NO! I WILL NOT SUBMIT TO YOU OR YOUR POWER.
WE ARE FREE MEN!

YOU HAVE NO PLACE HERE AMONG THE BANDAR.
BUT LOOK AT HIS STRENGTH!


SURELY HE COULD DEFEND OUR VILLAGE.
WE WOULD NOT NEED TO FEAR ANYONE FROM THE OUTSIDE.
DO YOU NOT SEE? IT IS N'DAMA HIMSELF WE SHOULD FEAR.

RESISTANCE IS FUTILE! THERE IS ONLY ONE CHOICE.
YOU MAY CONFER AMONG YOURSELVES, BUT YOU WOULD DO WELL TO DECIDE QUICKLY-- MY PATIENCE WEARS THIN!

THE TEMPERATURE AROUND YOU WILL CONTINUE TO FALL! THE FRIGID CLIMATE WILL WORSEN AND SPREAD UNTIL YOU AGREE TO ACCEPT ME AS YOUR LORD!
IF YOUR ANSWER IS TOO LONG COMING, YOU WILL ALL FREEZE TO DEATH! THAT IS THE PROMISE OF N'DAMA!

MEANWHILE, AT MONITOR...

SO YOU SEE, PHANTOM, WHILE PLOTTING AN INTERSTELLAR COURSE IS NOT EXACTLY CHILD'S PLAY...

NEITHER IS IT THE *FOREIGN LANGUAGE* I HAVE ALWAYS CONSIDERED IT.

THERE IS MUCH WE CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER, MY FRIEND

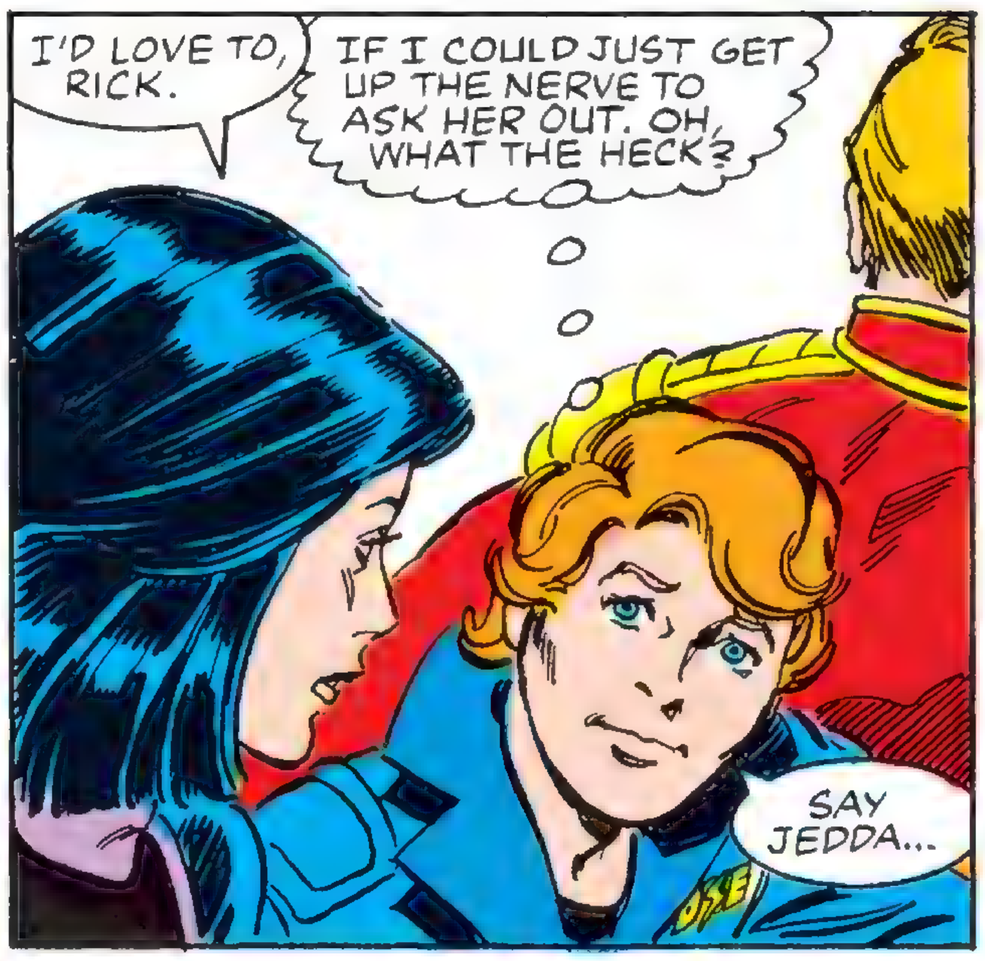
INDEED. IN FACT, IF YOU'D LIKE WE COULD CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION DOWN IN MY QUARTERS. THERE ARE A FEW THINGS I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU.

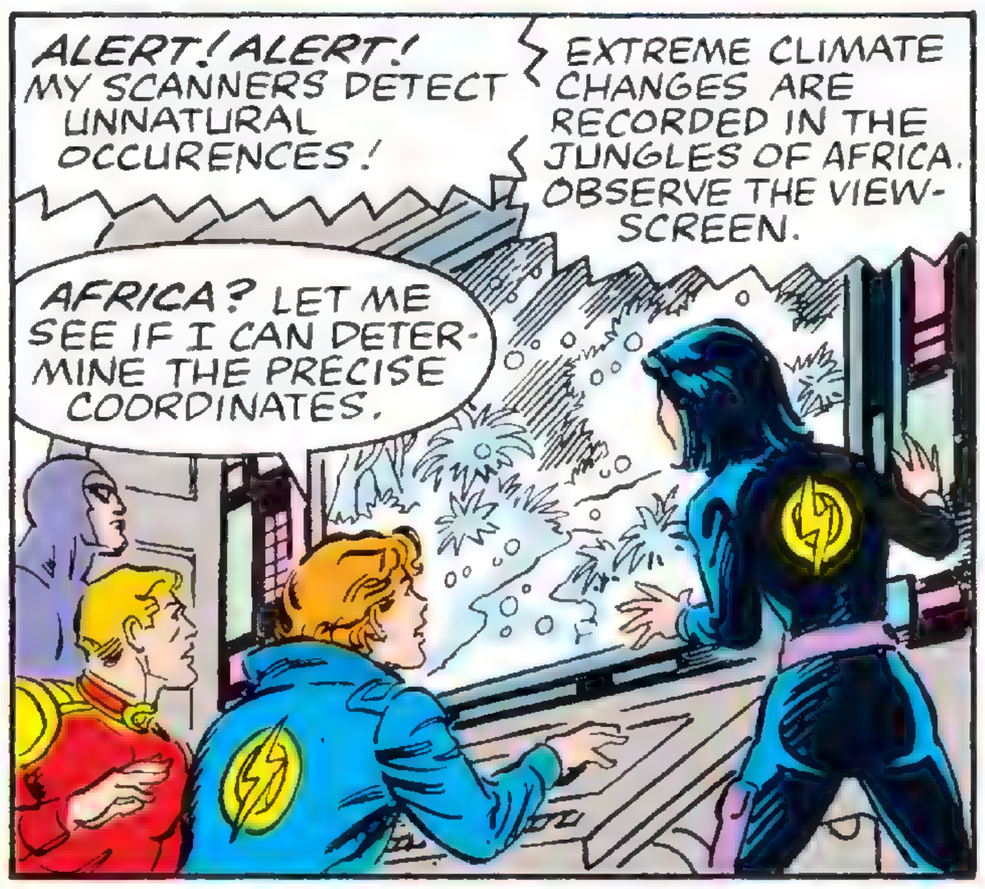
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS OVER OUR HEADS! WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GO PLAY SOME POOL. ARE YOU BOYS UP FOR A REMATCH?

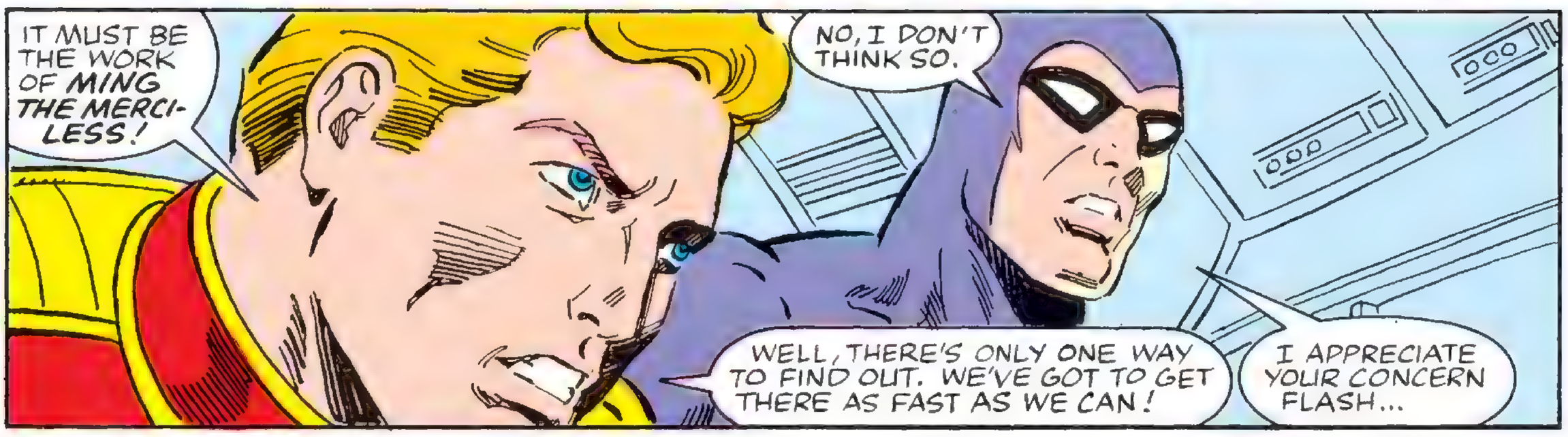
OF COURSE.

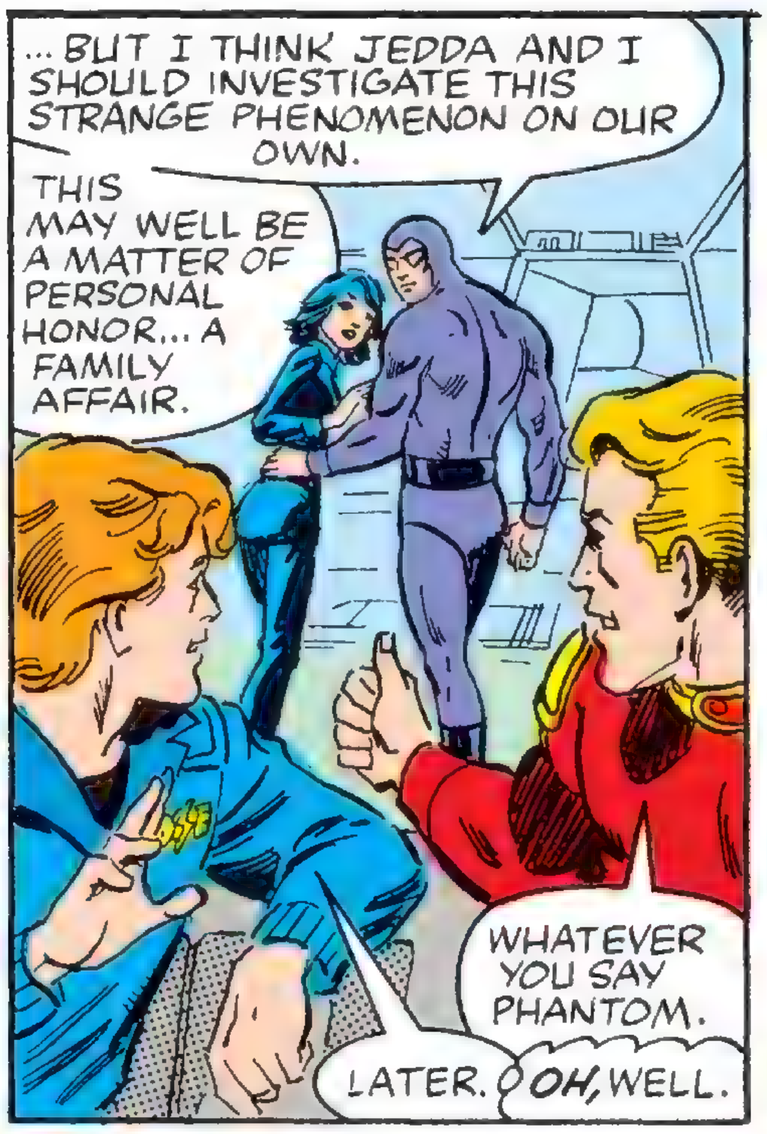
YOU BET... BUT HOW COME *ZUFFY* IS ALWAYS *YOUR* PARTNER?

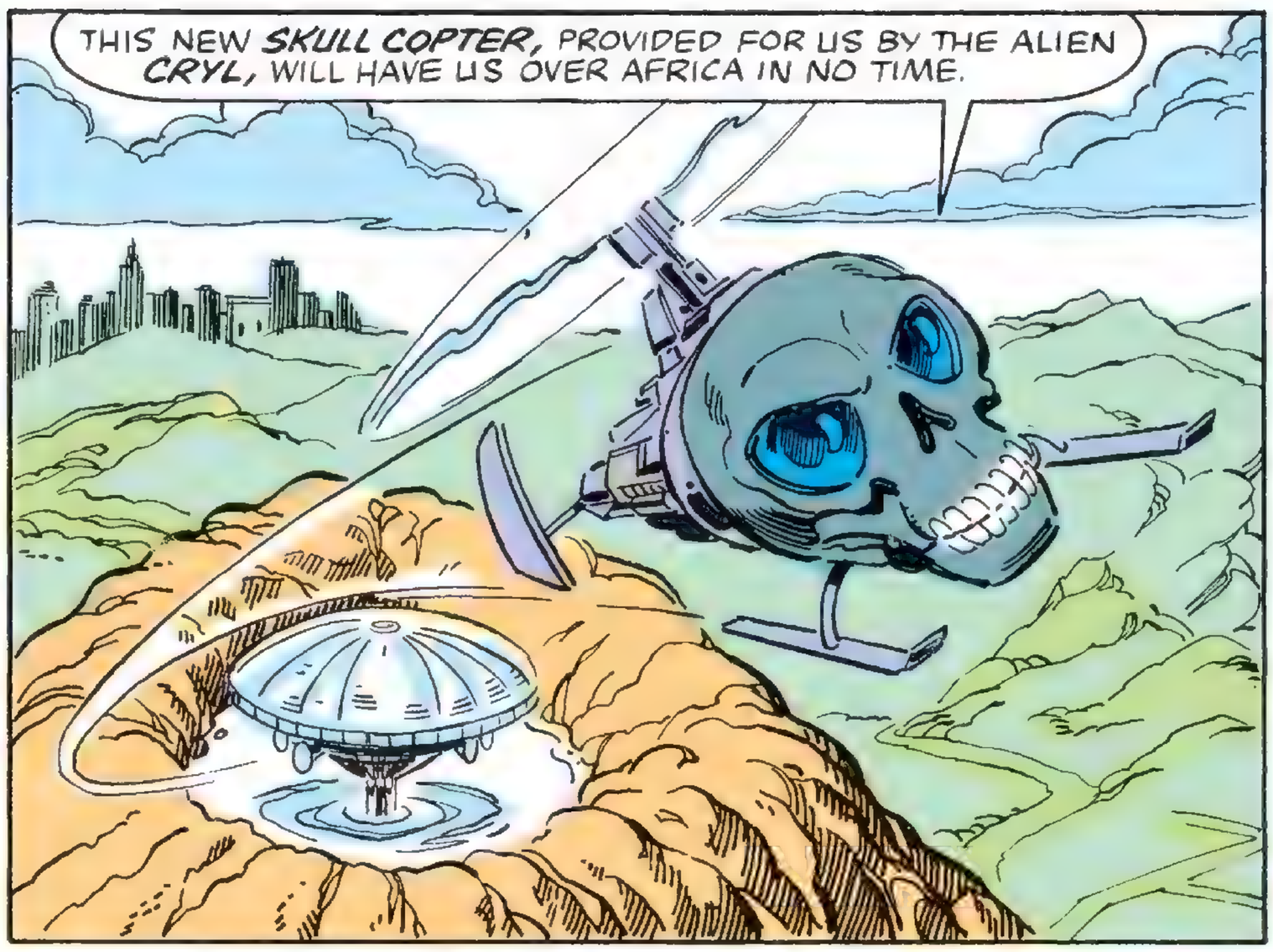
GUESS I'M GONNA BE HERE ALL ALONE... UNLESS YOU'D LIKE TO STAY AND SEE HOW *DYNAK X* WORKS, JEDDA.

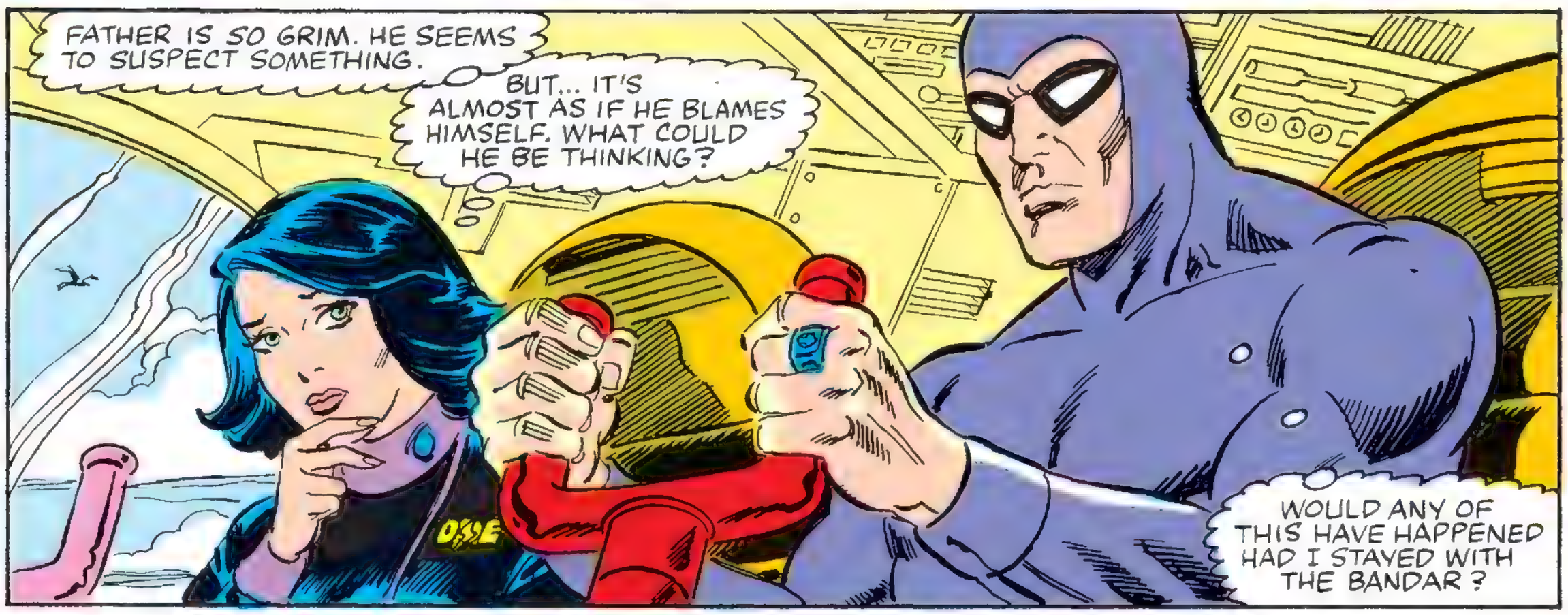


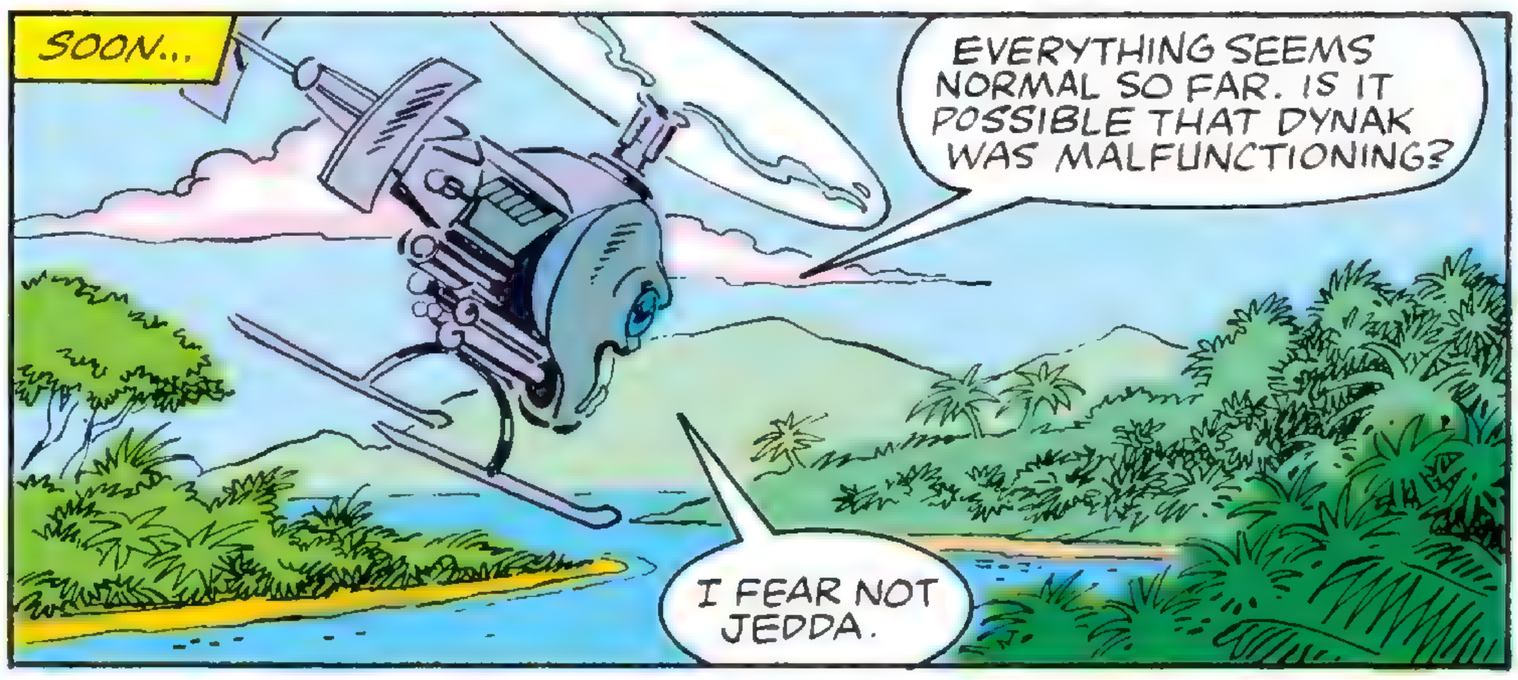


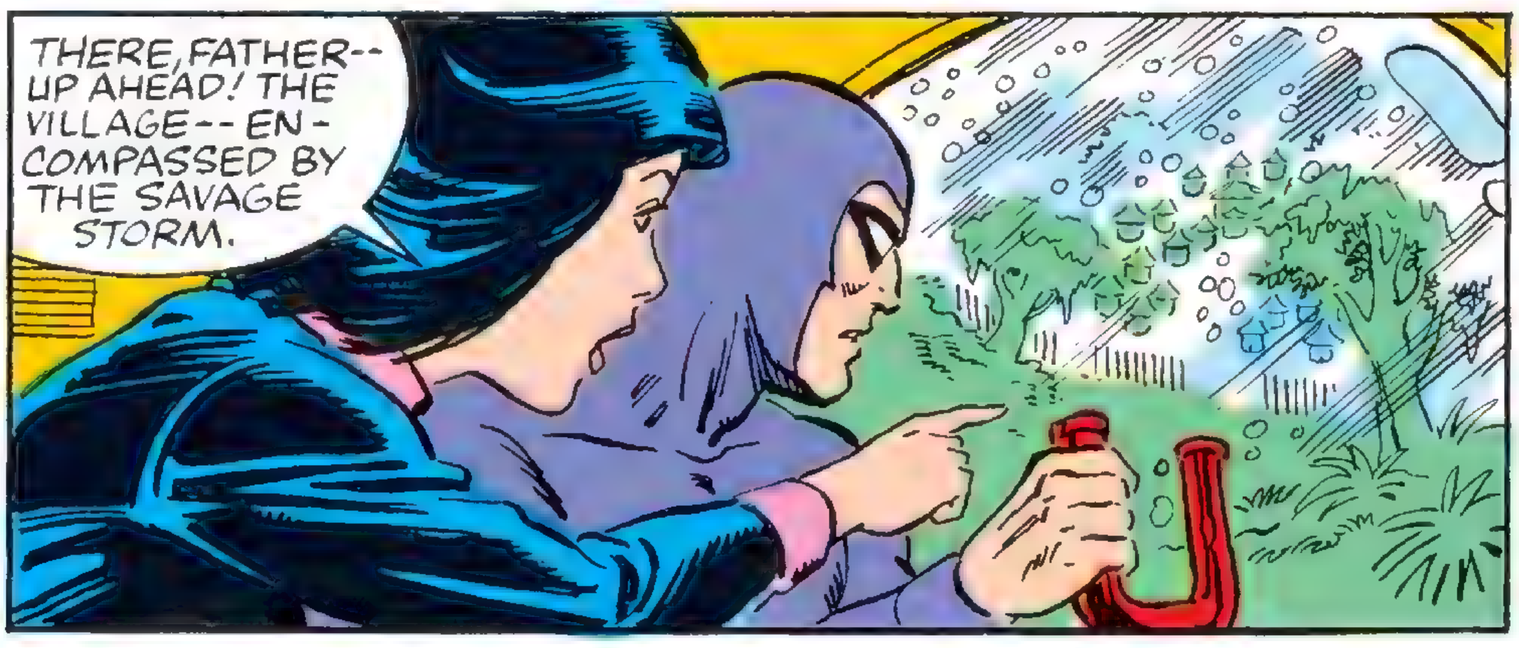

...BUT I THINK JEDDA AND I SHOULD INVESTIGATE THIS STRANGE PHENOMENON ON OUR OWN.
THIS MAY WELL BE A MATTER OF PERSONAL HONOR... A FAMILY AFFAIR.
WHATEVER YOU SAY PHANTOM.
LATER.
OH, WELL.

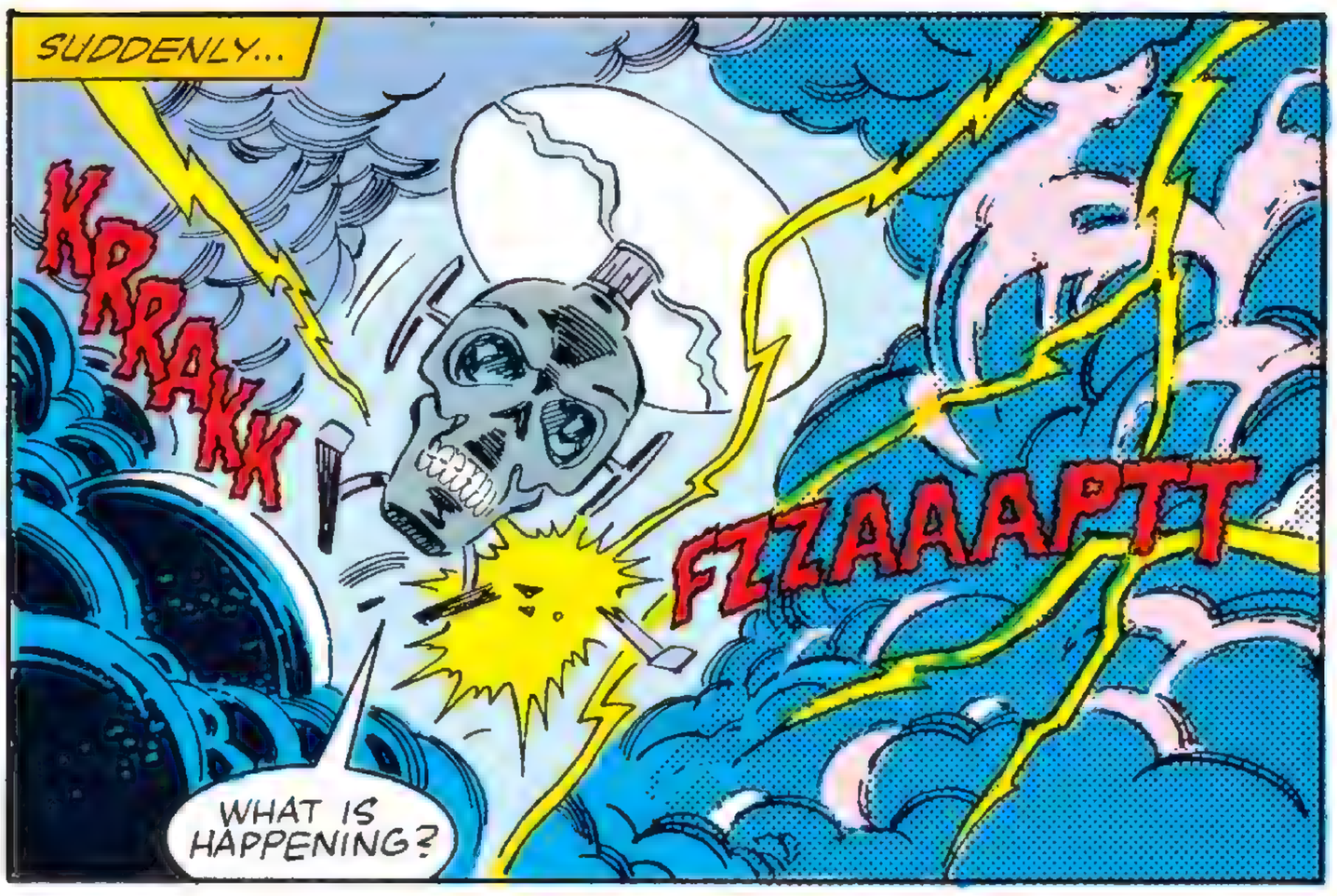

THIS NEW SKULL COPTER, PROVIDED FOR US BY THE ALIEN CRYL, WILL HAVE US OVER AFRICA IN NO TIME.

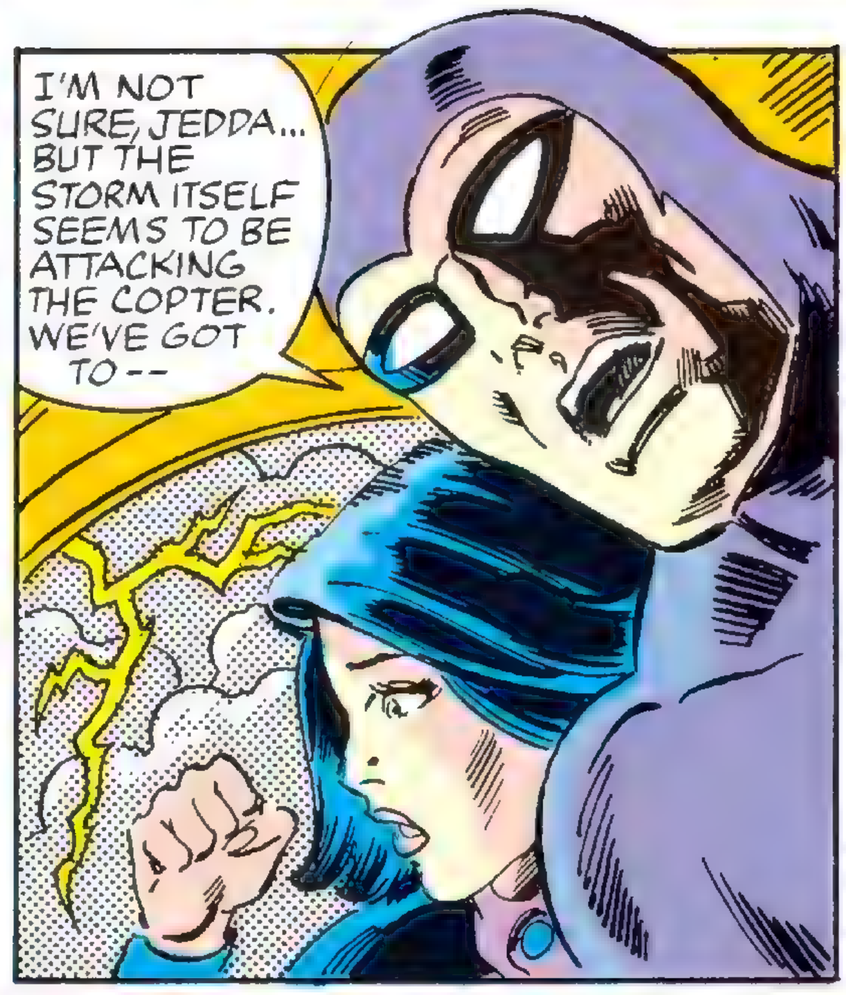

FATHER IS SO GRIM. HE SEEMS TO SUSPECT SOMETHING.
BUT... IT'S ALMOST AS IF HE BLAMES HIMSELF. WHAT COULD HE BE THINKING?
WOULD ANY OF THIS HAVE HAPPENED HAD I STAYED WITH THE BANDAR?

WHY DO I HAVE THE FEELING THAT THIS WAS ALL SET IN MOTION BECAUSE OF SOMETHING THAT INVOLVES MY PAST?


SOON...
EVERYTHING SEEMS NORMAL SO FAR. IS IT POSSIBLE THAT DYNAK WAS MALFUNCTIONING?
I FEAR NOT JEDDA.


THERE, FATHER-- UP AHEAD! THE VILLAGE-- EN-COMPASSED BY THE SAVAGE STORM.

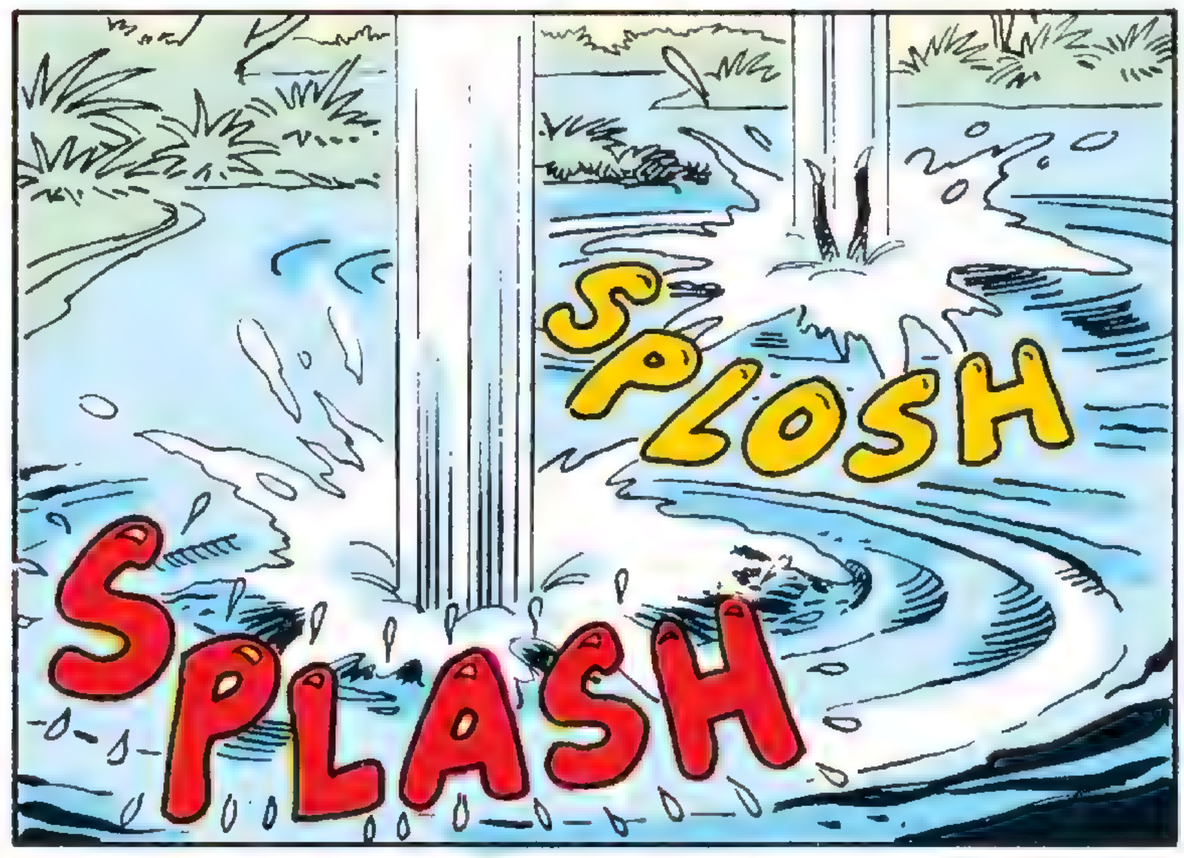

SUDDENLY...
KRRAKK
FZZAAAPTT
WHAT IS HAPPENING?

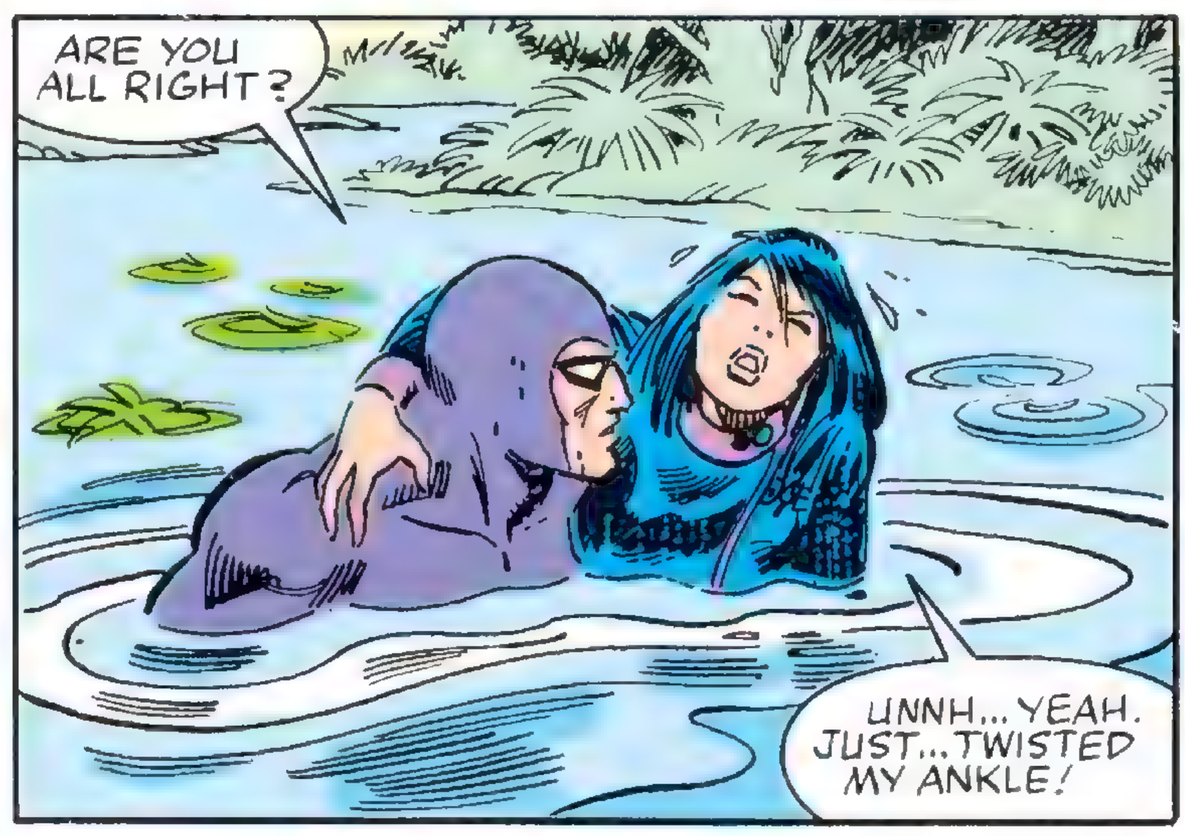

I'M NOT SURE, JEDDA... BUT THE STORM ITSELF SEEMS TO BE ATTACKING THE COPTER. WE'VE GOT TO --

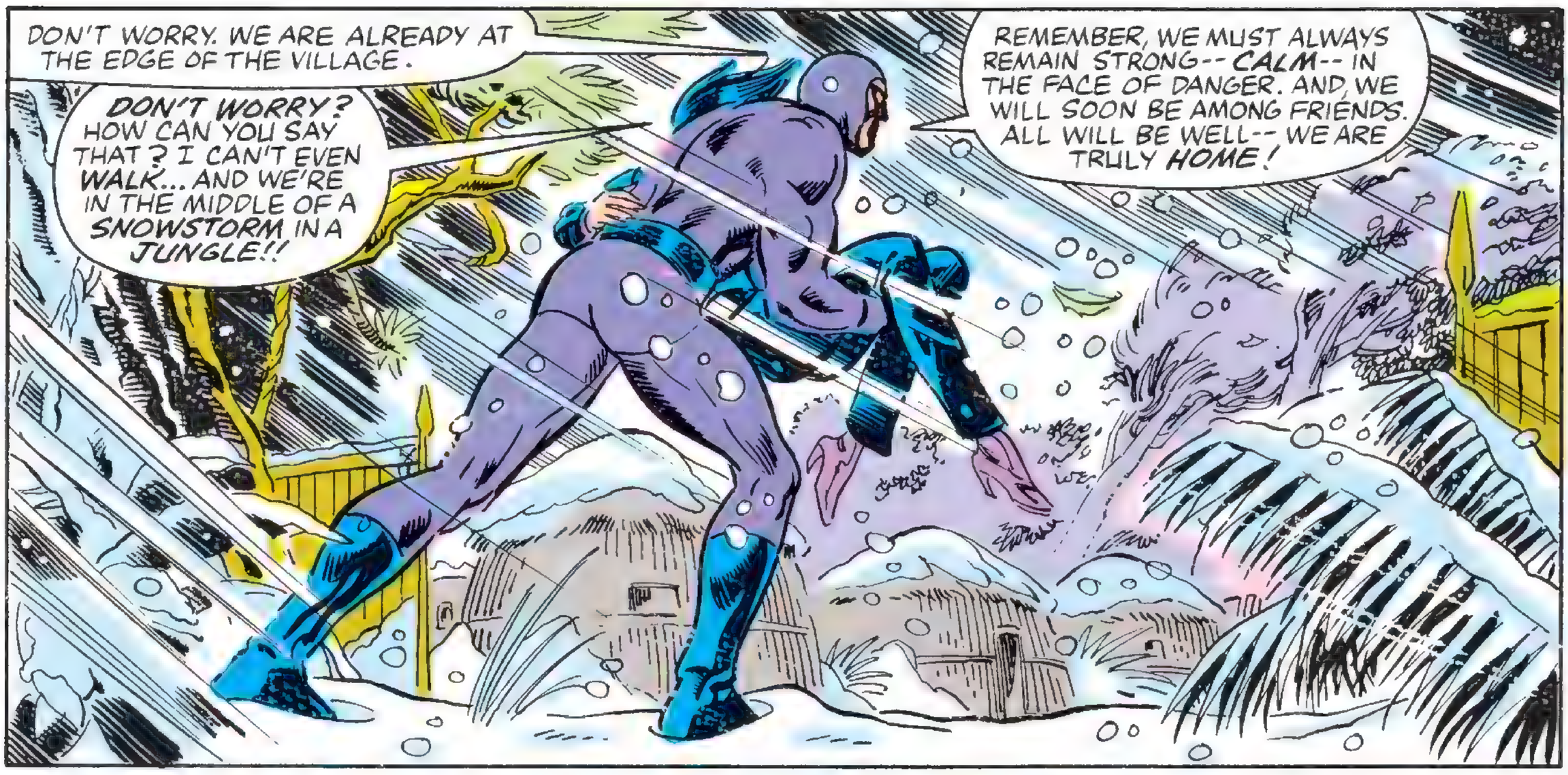
--LEAP!!
JUST IN TIME!

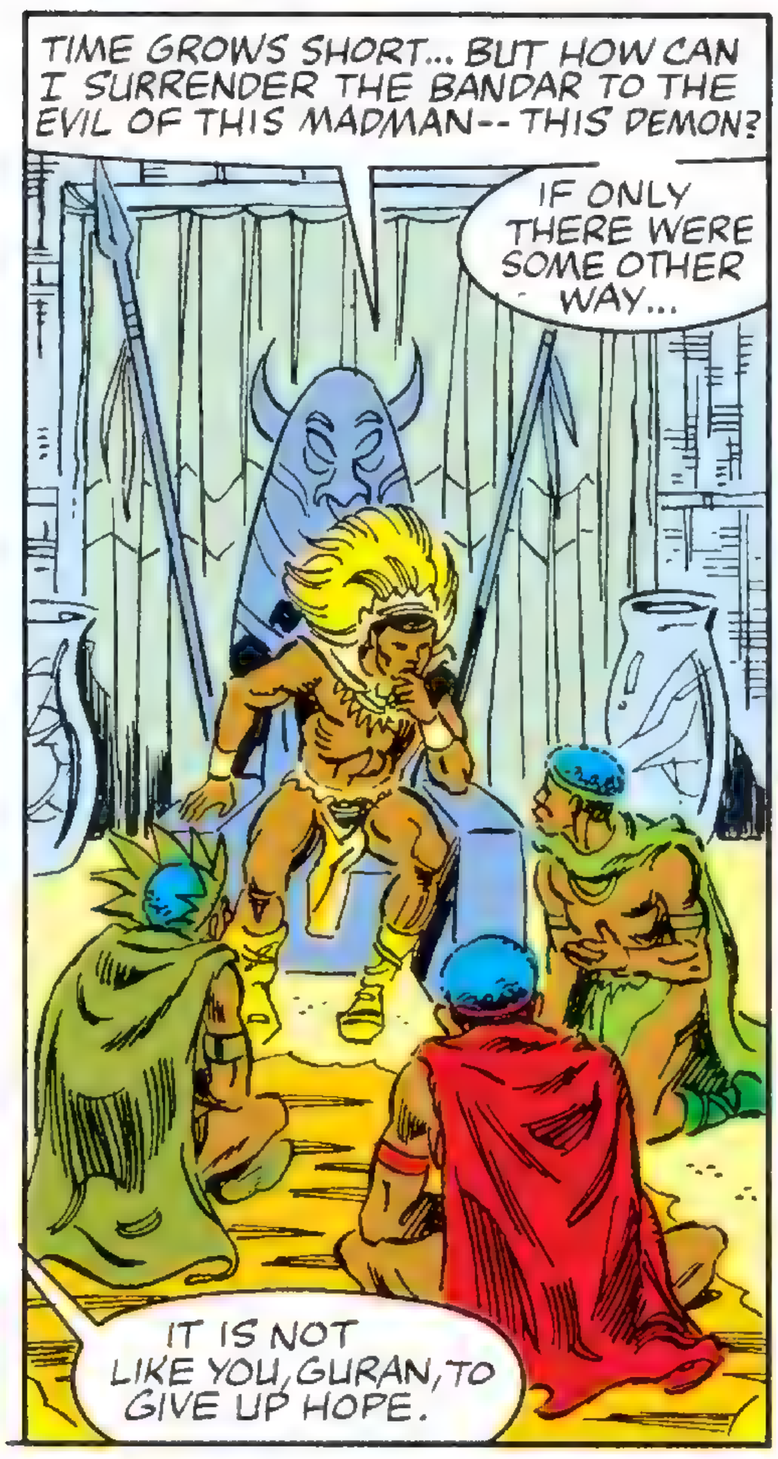
WE'VE GOT TO SLOW OUR DESCENT...GRAB THE VINES BENEATH US...

...AND TRY TO AIM TOWARD THE RIVER.

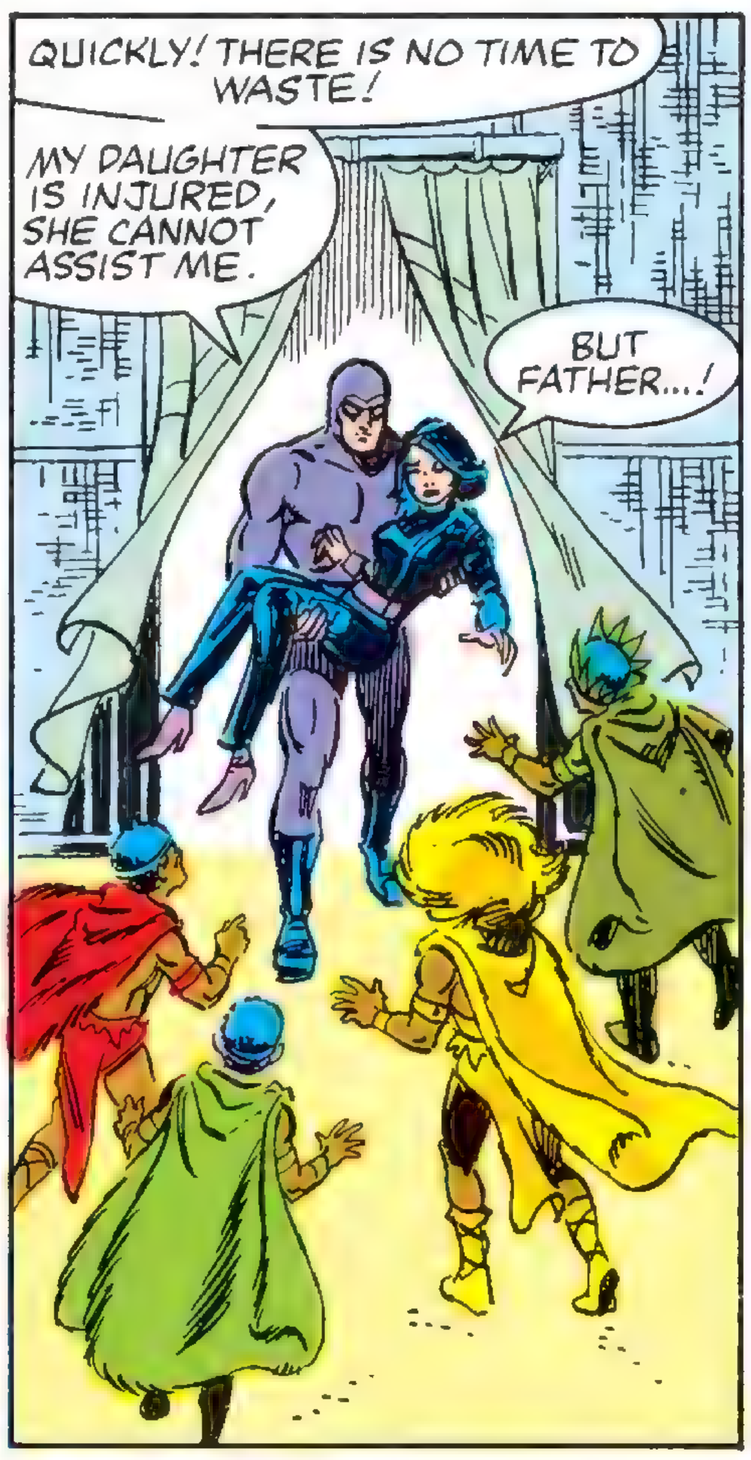

SPLOSH
SPLASH


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
UNNH... YEAH. JUST...TWISTED MY ANKLE!


DON'T WORRY. WE ARE ALREADY AT THE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE.
DON'T WORRY? HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? I CAN'T EVEN WALK... AND WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A SNOWSTORM IN A JUNGLE!!
REMEMBER, WE MUST ALWAYS REMAIN STRONG-- CALM-- IN THE FACE OF DANGER. AND, WE WILL SOON BE AMONG FRIENDS. ALL WILL BE WELL-- WE ARE TRULY HOME!


TIME GROWS SHORT... BUT HOW CAN I SURRENDER THE BANDAR TO THE EVIL OF THIS MADMAN-- THIS DEMON?
IF ONLY THERE WERE SOME OTHER WAY...
IT IS NOT LIKE YOU, GURAN, TO GIVE UP HOPE.

PHANTOM!!
AN ANSWER TO OUR PRAYERS!
THE GHOST WHO WALKS!


QUICKLY! THERE IS NO TIME TO WASTE!
MY DAUGHTER IS INJURED, SHE CANNOT ASSIST ME.
BUT FATHER...!

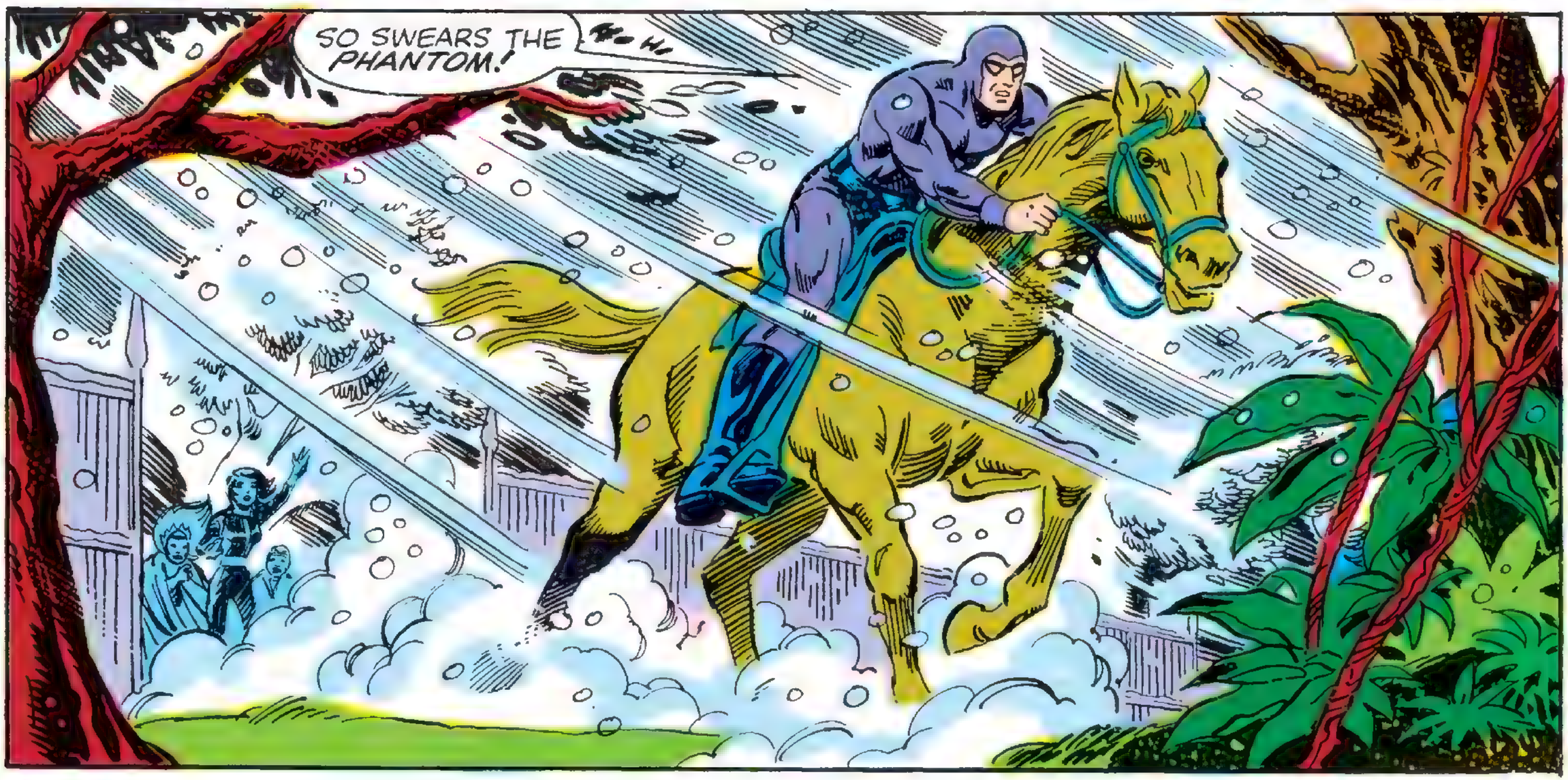
THERE IS NO SENSE IN ARGUING.
YOU ARE IN NO CONDITION! YOU WILL STAY HERE! I WILL DEAL WITH THIS SITUATION ON MY OWN!
BUT FIRST YOU MUST TELL ME ALL THAT HAS TRANSPIRED!

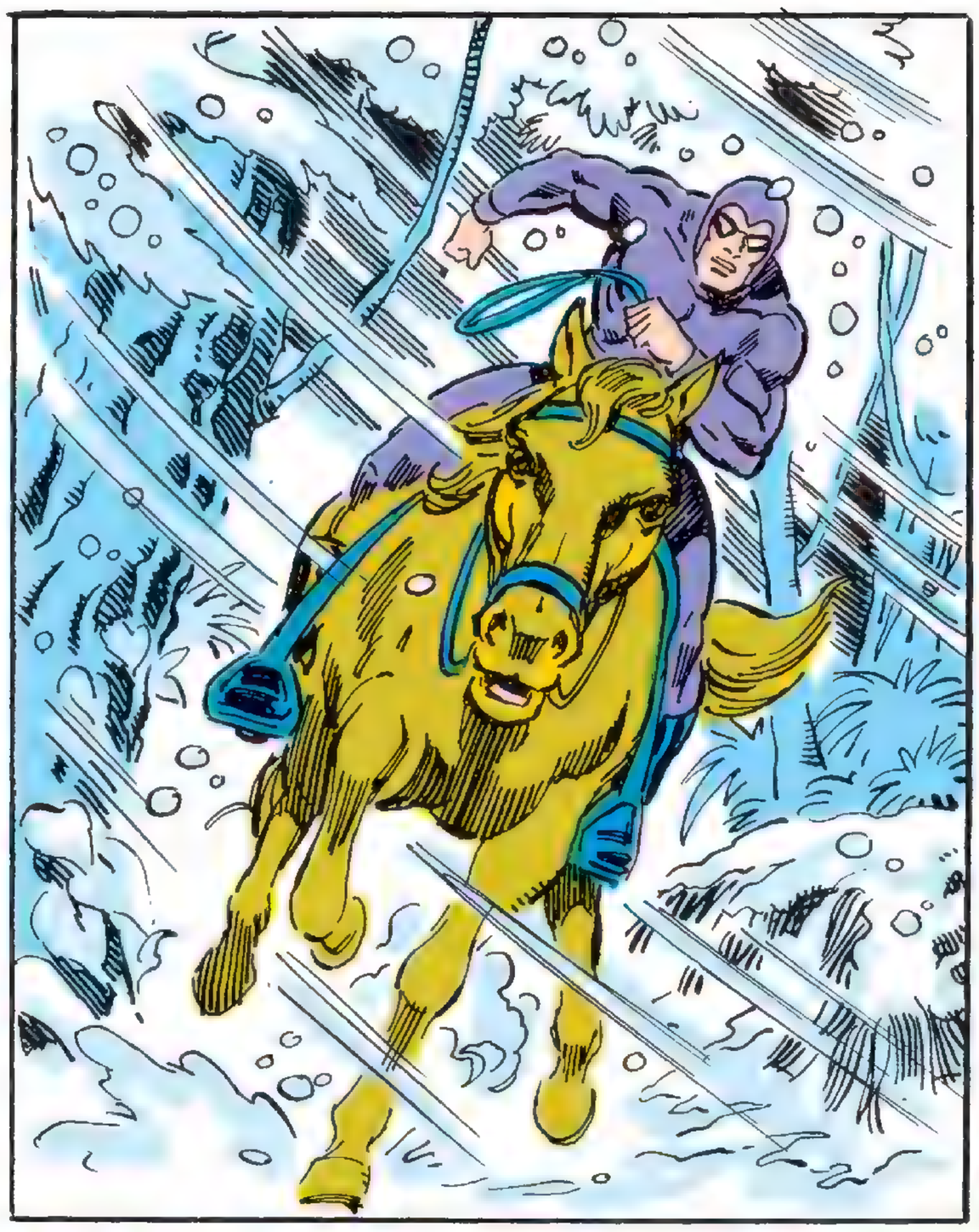
AND... THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE-- SOMETHING YOU WILL NOT LIKE... BUT THE DEMON RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS UNNATURAL OCCURRENCE IS STRANGELY FAMILIAR.

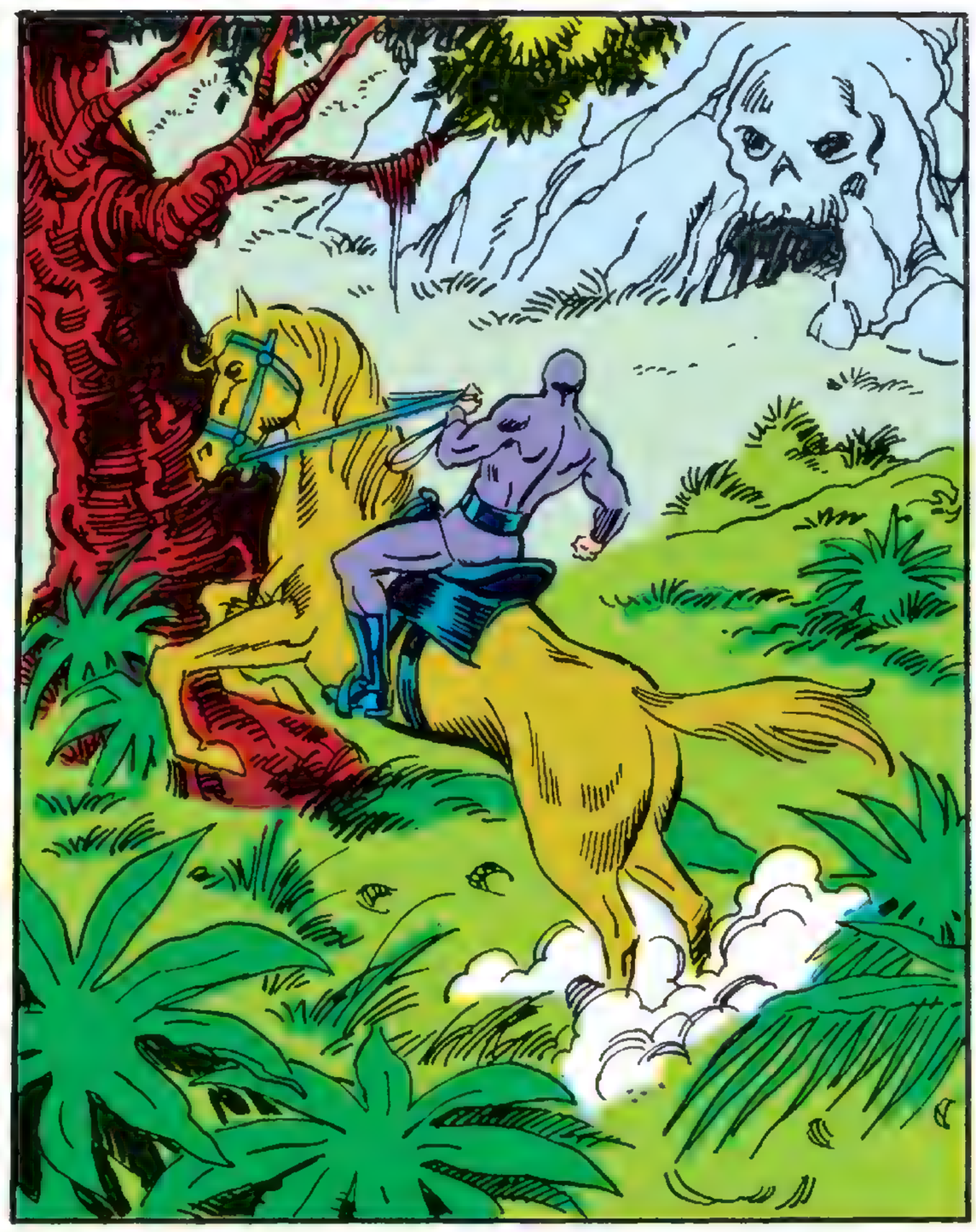
I WILL NOT SAY FOR CERTAIN, BUT YOU MAY WELL RECOGNIZE HIM.
WHERE CAN I FIND N'DAMA?

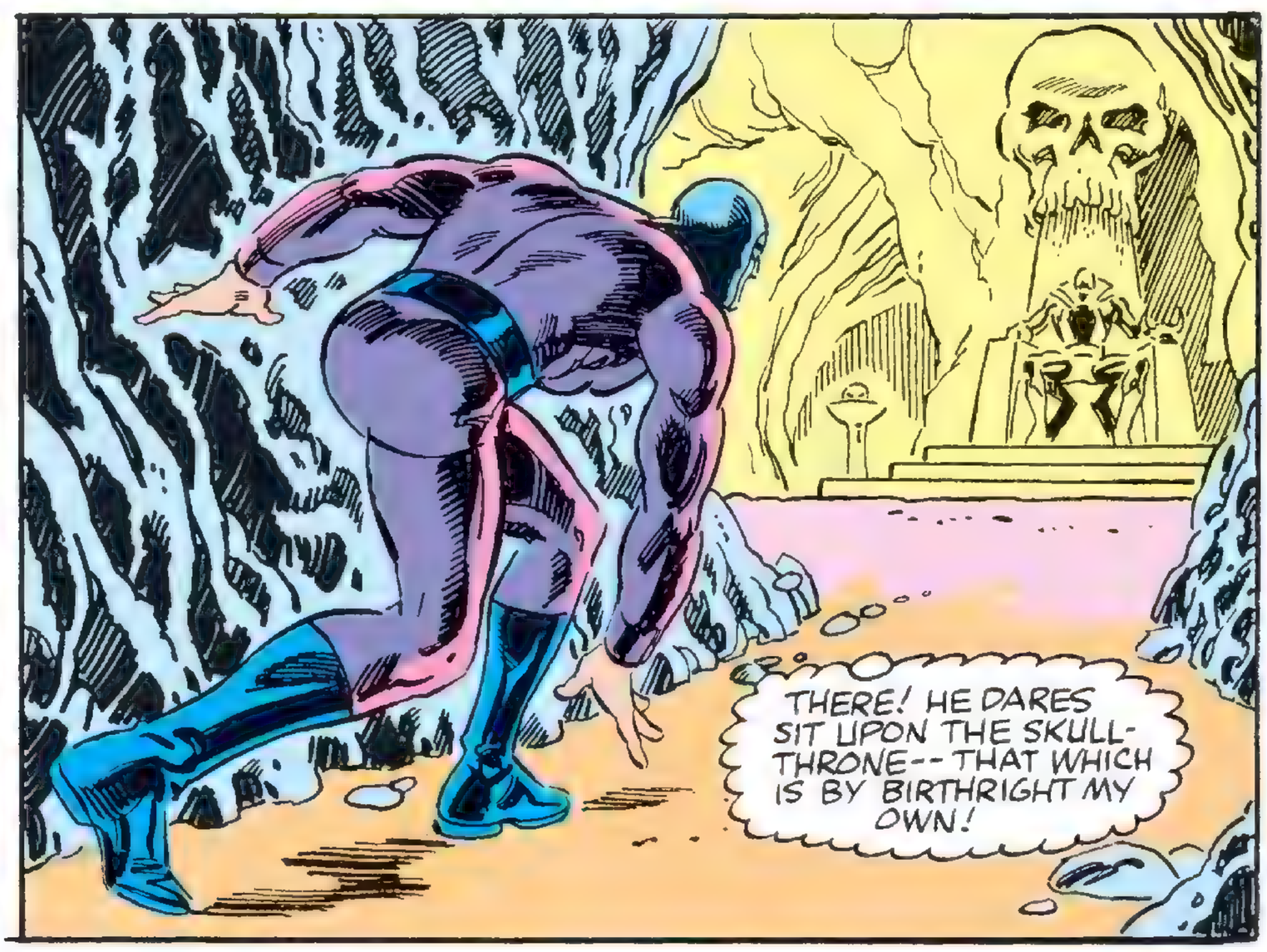
I AM AFRAID THAT OUR SCOUTS REPORT THAT THIS WEATHER DEVIL HAS CHOSEN YOUR OWN SKULL CAVE AS HIS DWELLING PLACE. THE AREA SURROUNDING IT IS UNAFFECTED BY THE FREEZING TEMPERATURES THAT THREATEN THE REST OF THE REGION.
WHAT?!

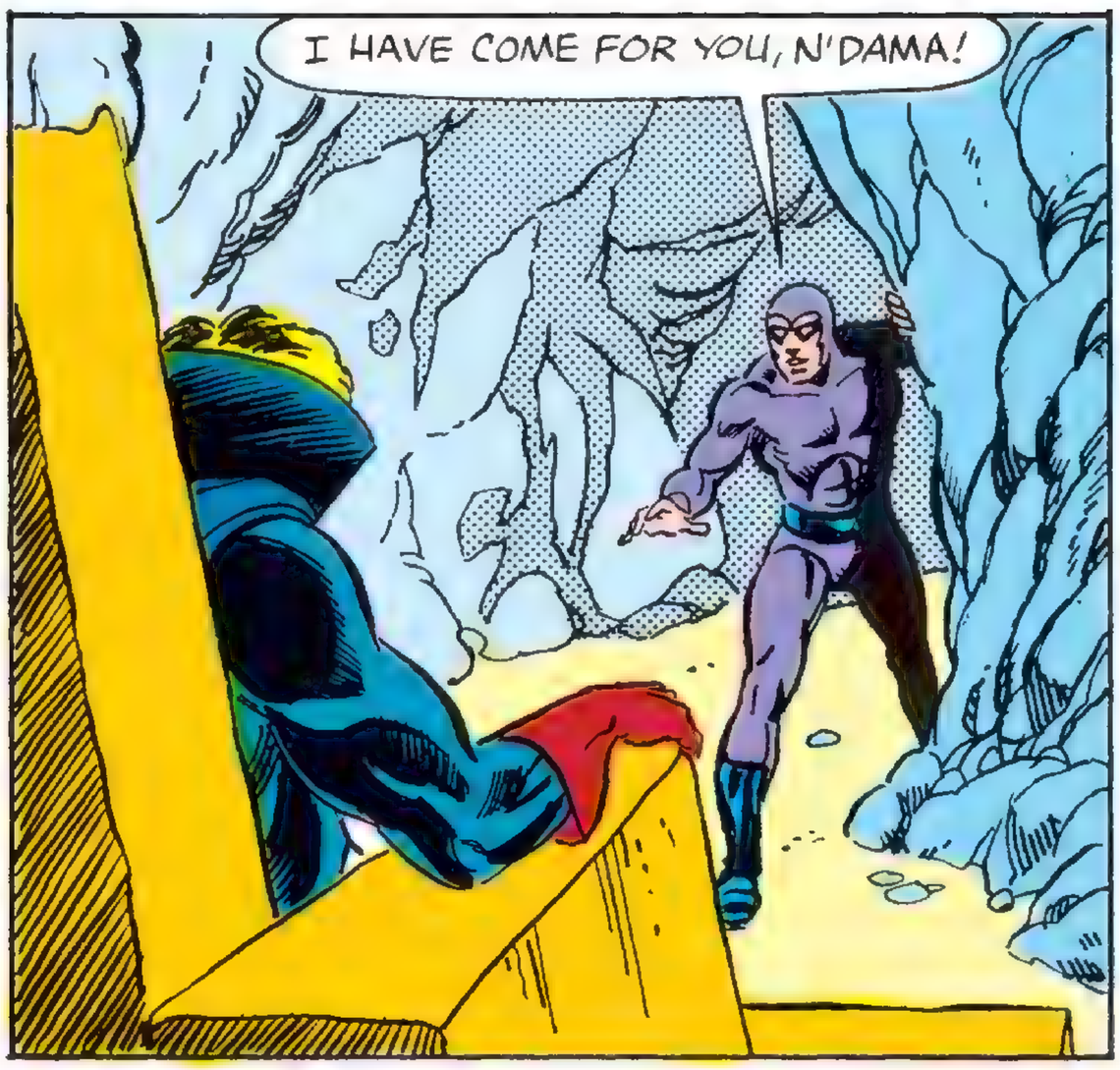
THE CAVE HAS BEEN MY FAMILY HOME FOR CENTURIES! IF HE HAS DESECRATED IT IN ANY WAY... DEFILED ITS SANCTITY--
--HE WILL PAY FOR HIS ACTIONS!

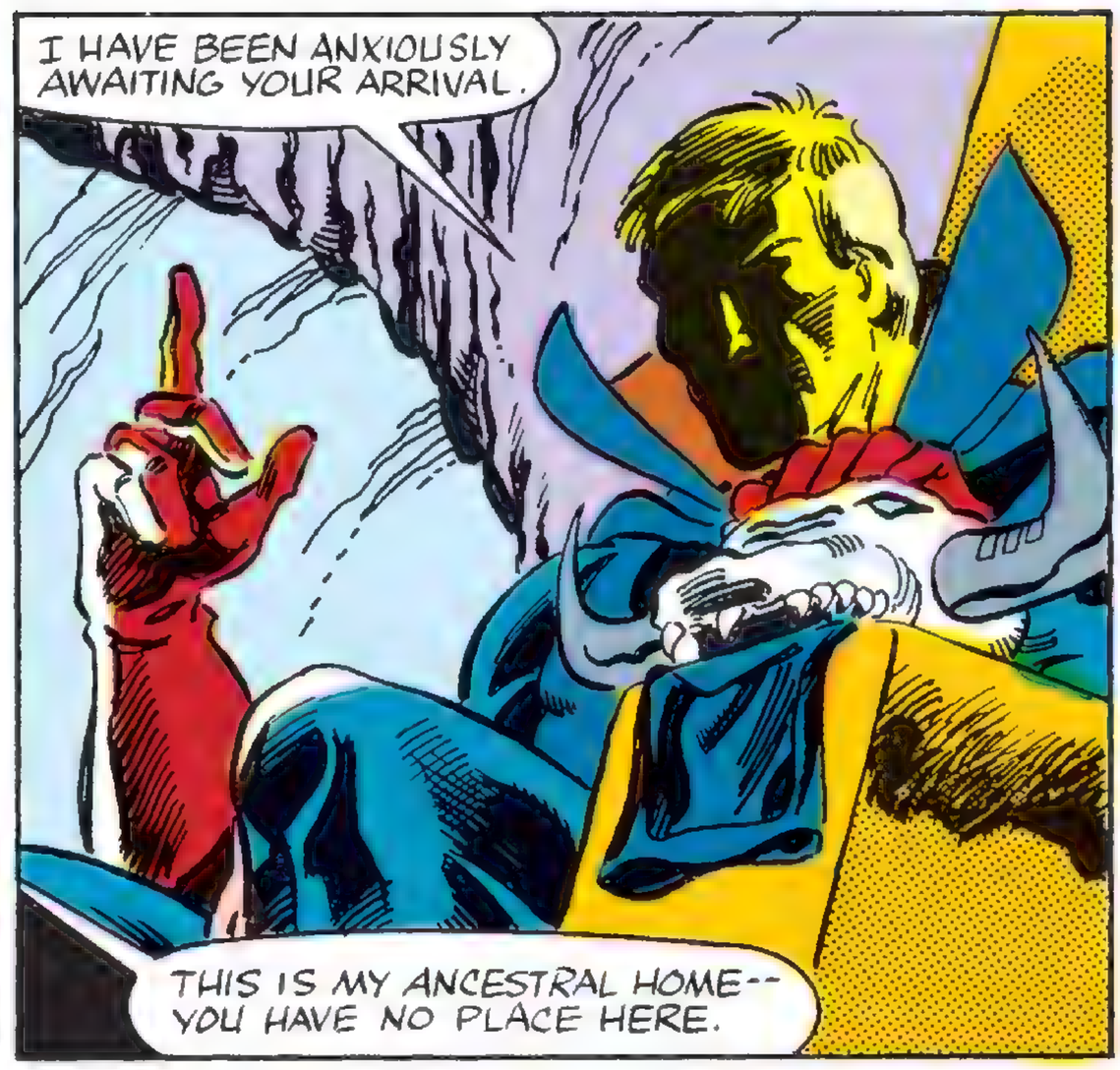

SO SWEARS THE PHANTOM!

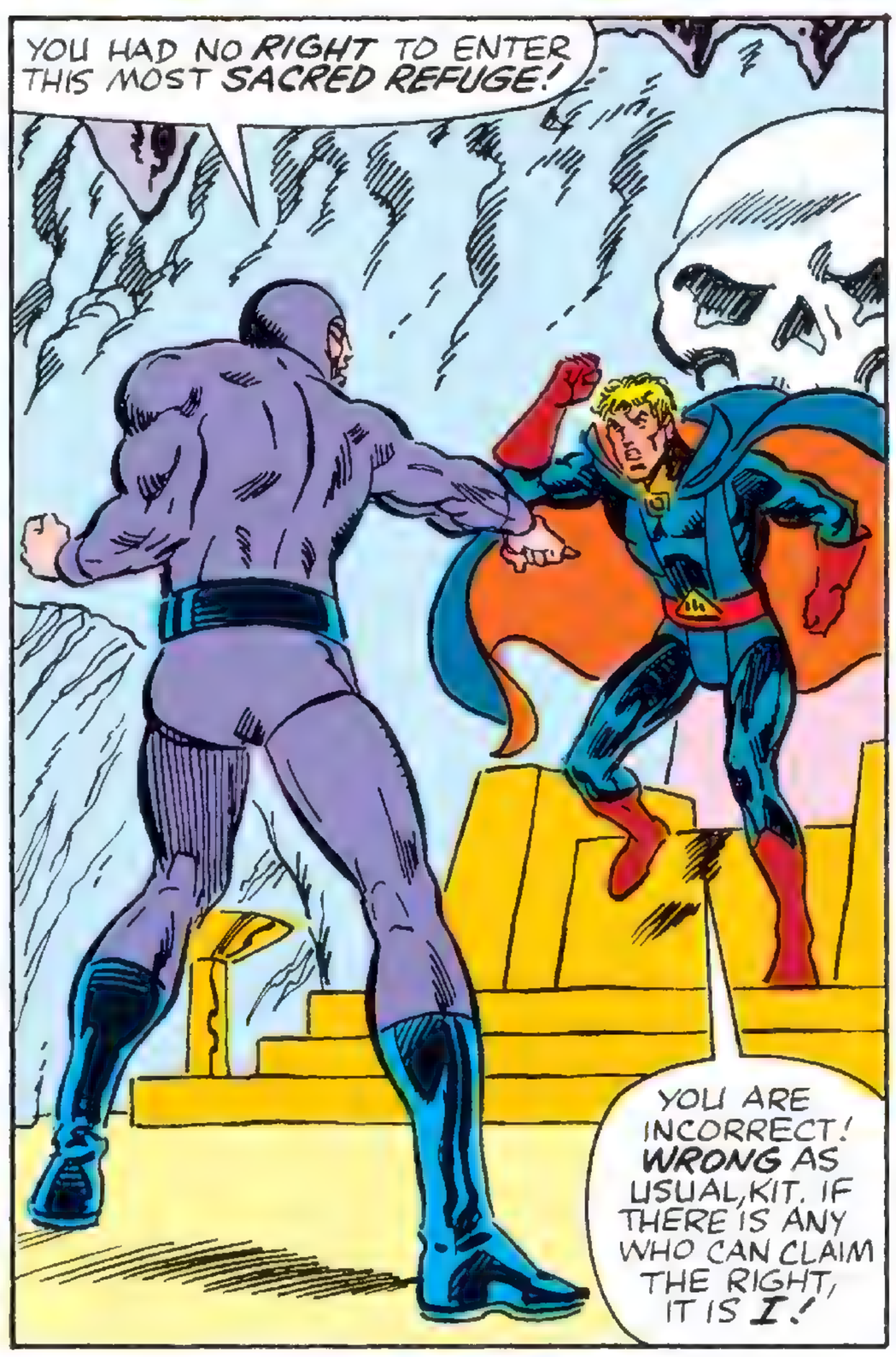


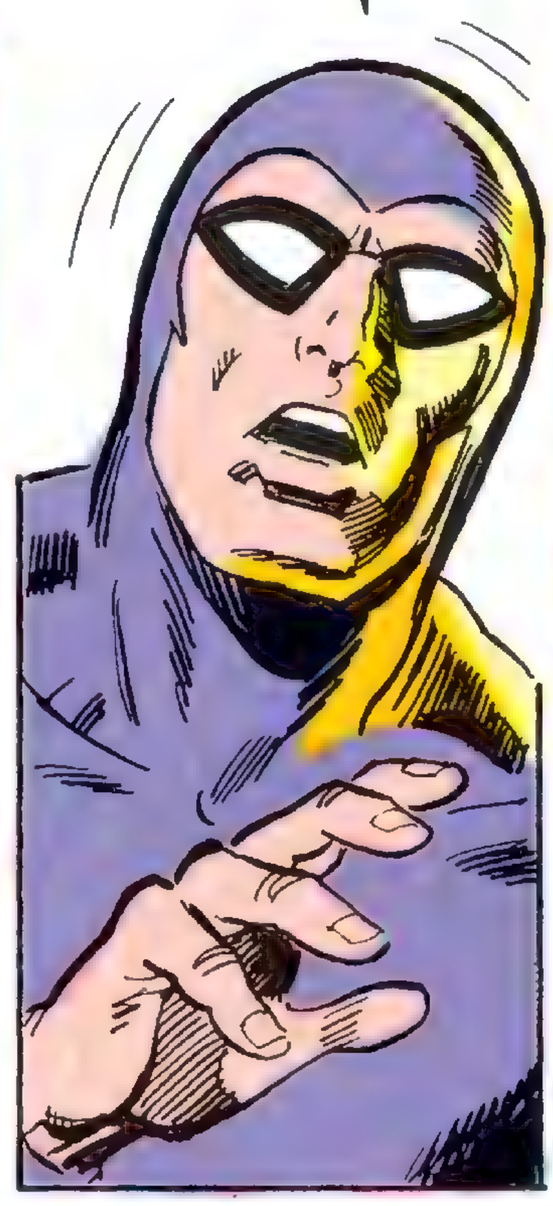


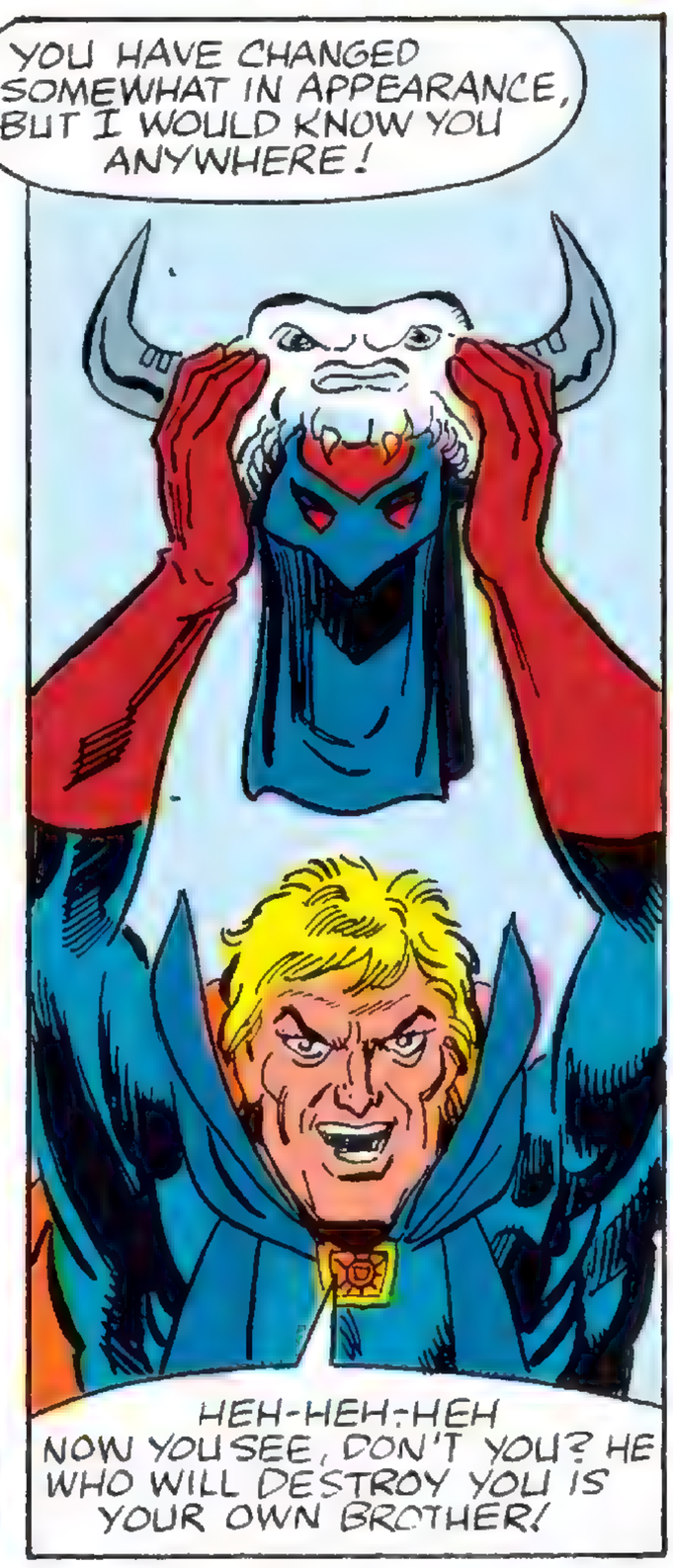

THERE! HE DARES SIT UPON THE SKULL-THRONE--THAT WHICH IS BY BIRTHRIGHT MY OWN!


I HAVE COME FOR YOU, N'DAMA!


I HAVE BEEN ANXIOUSLY AWAITING YOUR ARRIVAL.
THIS IS MY ANCESTRAL HOME-- YOU HAVE NO PLACE HERE.

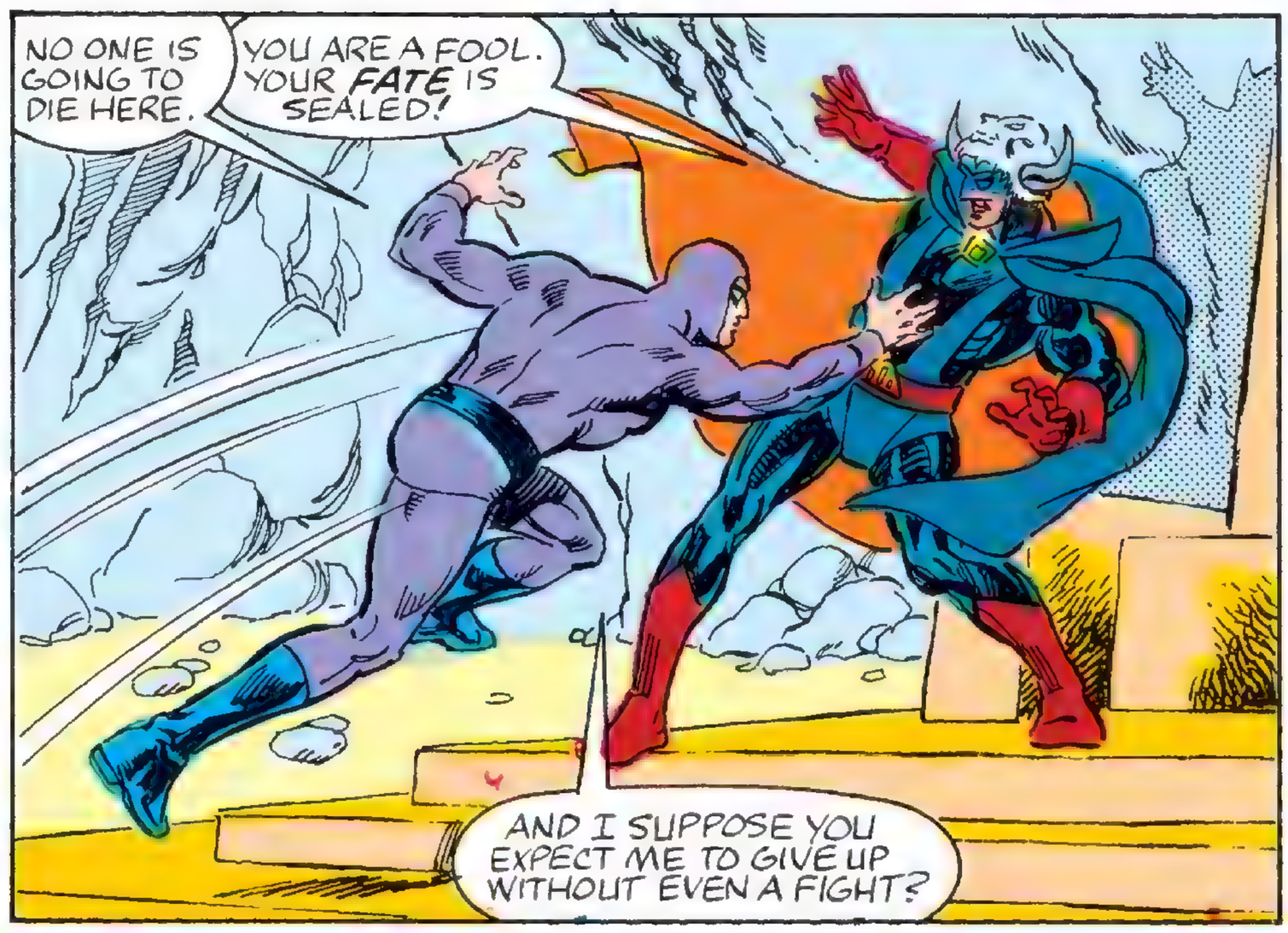

YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO ENTER THIS MOST SACRED REFUGE!
YOU ARE INCORRECT! WRONG AS USUAL, KIT. IF THERE IS ANY WHO CAN CLAIM THE RIGHT, IT IS I!

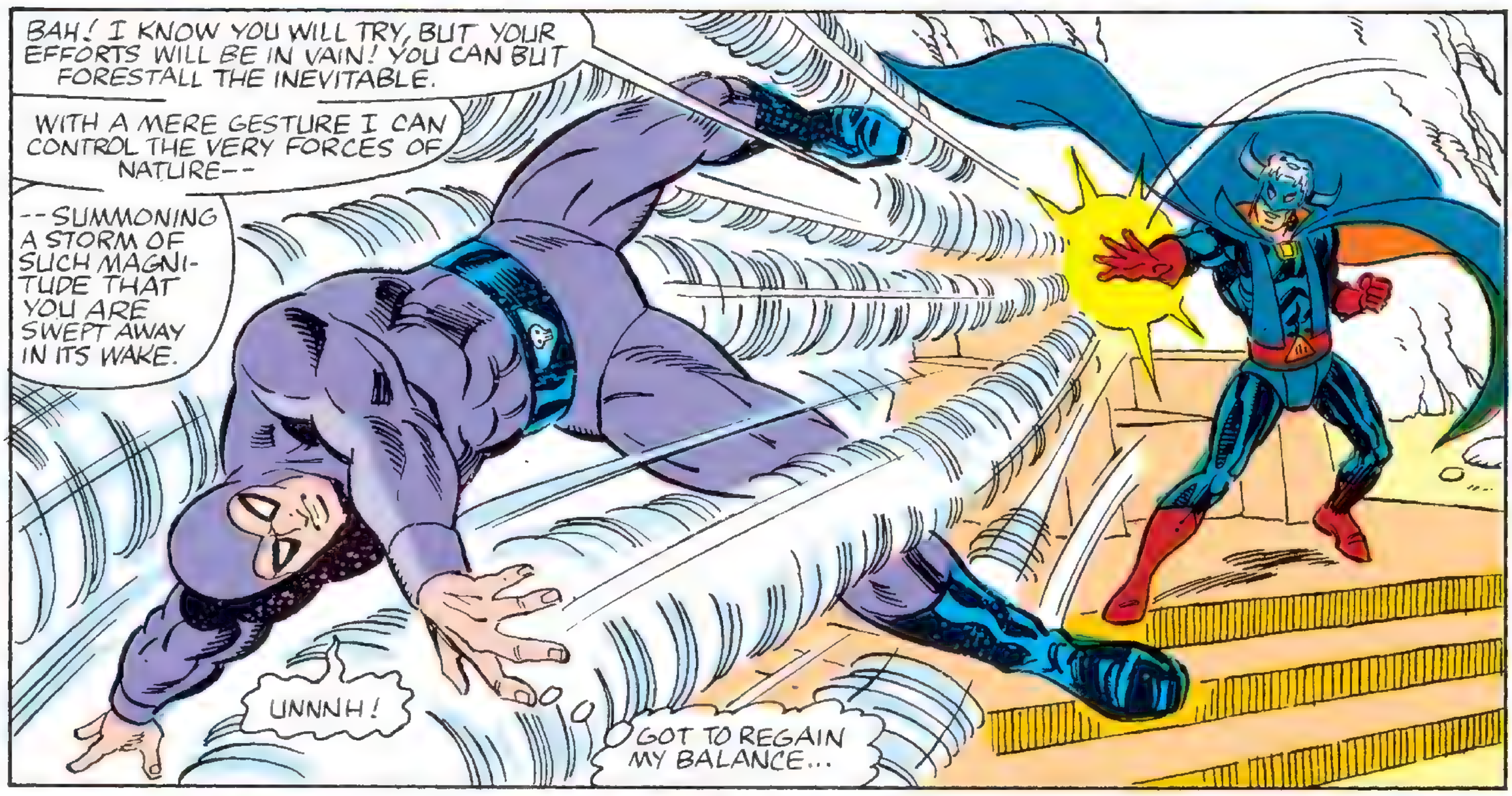

GURAN WAS RIGHT, BUT I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT. YOU!

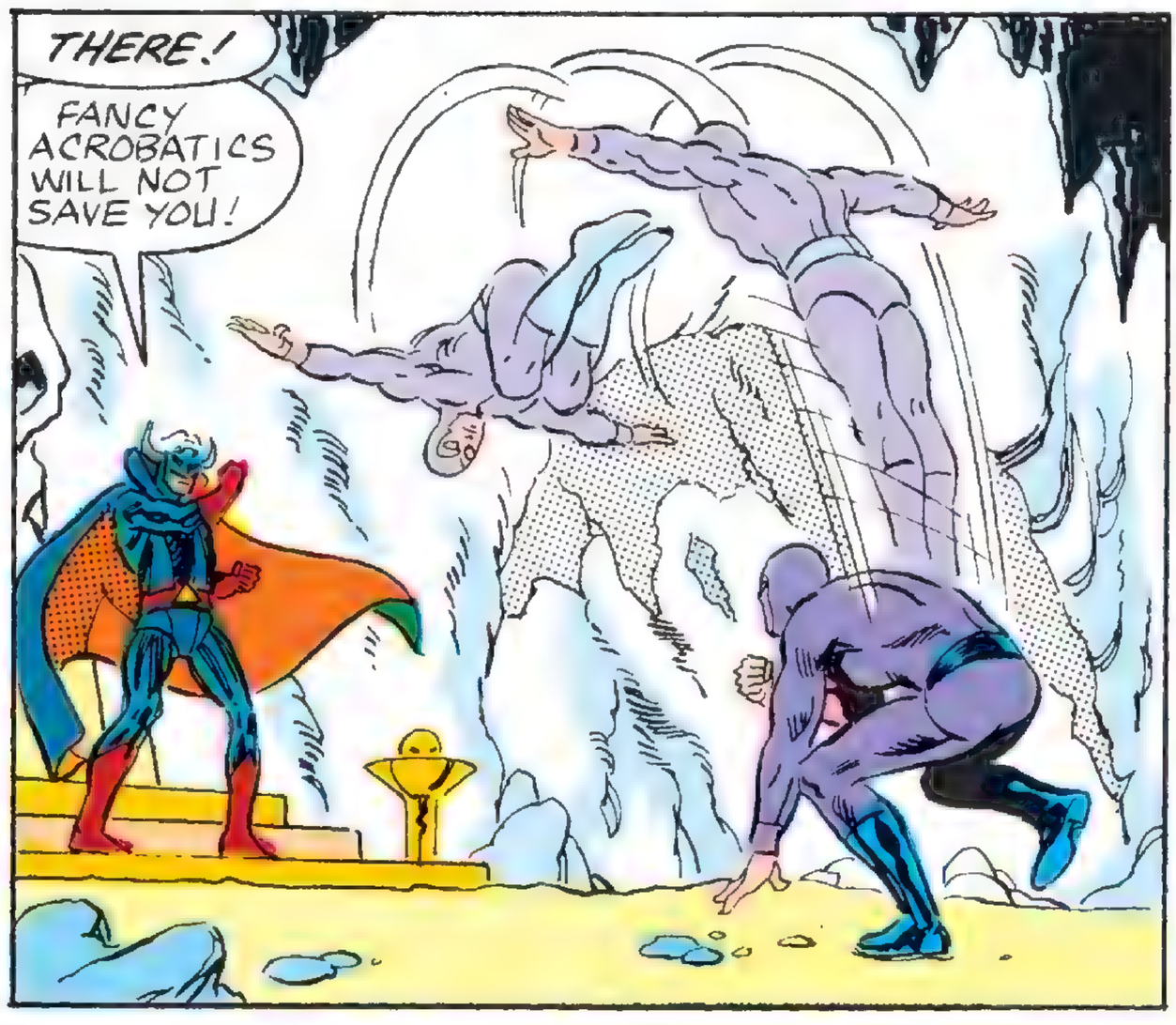

YOU HAVE CHANGED SOMEWHAT IN APPEARANCE, BUT I WOULD KNOW YOU ANYWHERE!
HEH-HEH-HEH NOW YOU SEE, DON'T YOU? HE WHO WILL DESTROY YOU IS YOUR OWN BROTHER!

BUT DON'T WORRY, KIT. THE BANDAR WILL BE TAKEN CARE OF -- PROVIDED FOR... IF THEY WILL JUST ACCEPT ME AS THEIR LORD!
BUT, TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR THEM, EVEN AS IT HAS RUN OUT FOR YOU!

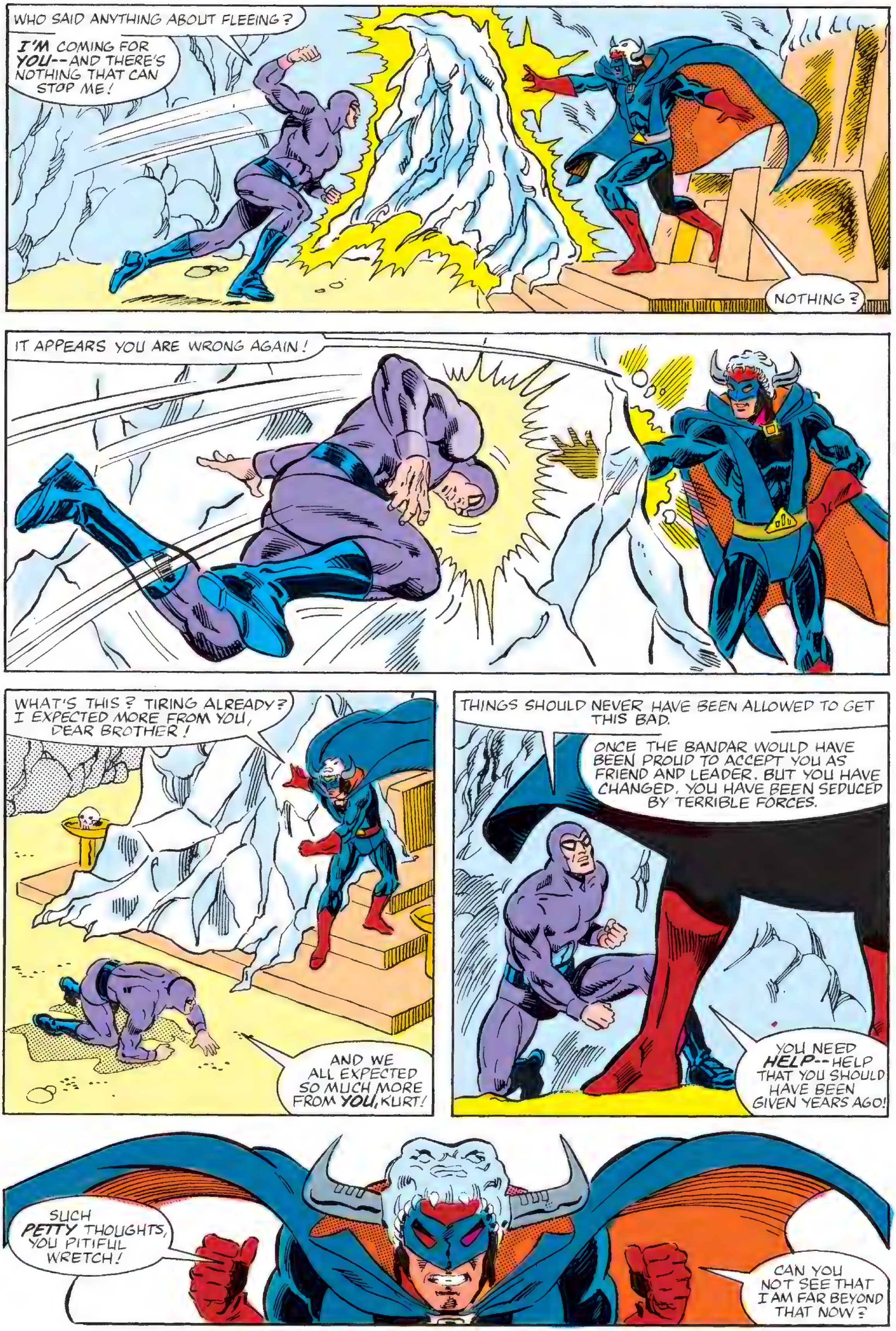
MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR MAKER, BROTHER YOU ARE A DEAD MAN!


NO ONE IS GOING TO DIE HERE.
YOU ARE A FOOL. YOUR FATE IS SEALED!
AND I SUPPOSE YOU EXPECT ME TO GIVE UP WITHOUT EVEN A FIGHT?


BAH! I KNOW YOU WILL TRY, BUT YOUR EFFORTS WILL BE IN VAIN! YOU CAN BUT FORESTALL THE INEVITABLE.
WITH A MERE GESTURE I CAN CONTROL THE VERY FORCES OF NATURE--
--SUMMONING A STORM OF SUCH MAGNITUDE THAT YOU ARE SWEPT AWAY IN ITS WAKE.
UNNNH!
GOT TO REGAIN MY BALANCE...


THERE!
FANCY ACROBATICS WILL NOT SAVE YOU!

THERE IS NO PLACE TO FLEE THE WRATH OF N'DAMA!

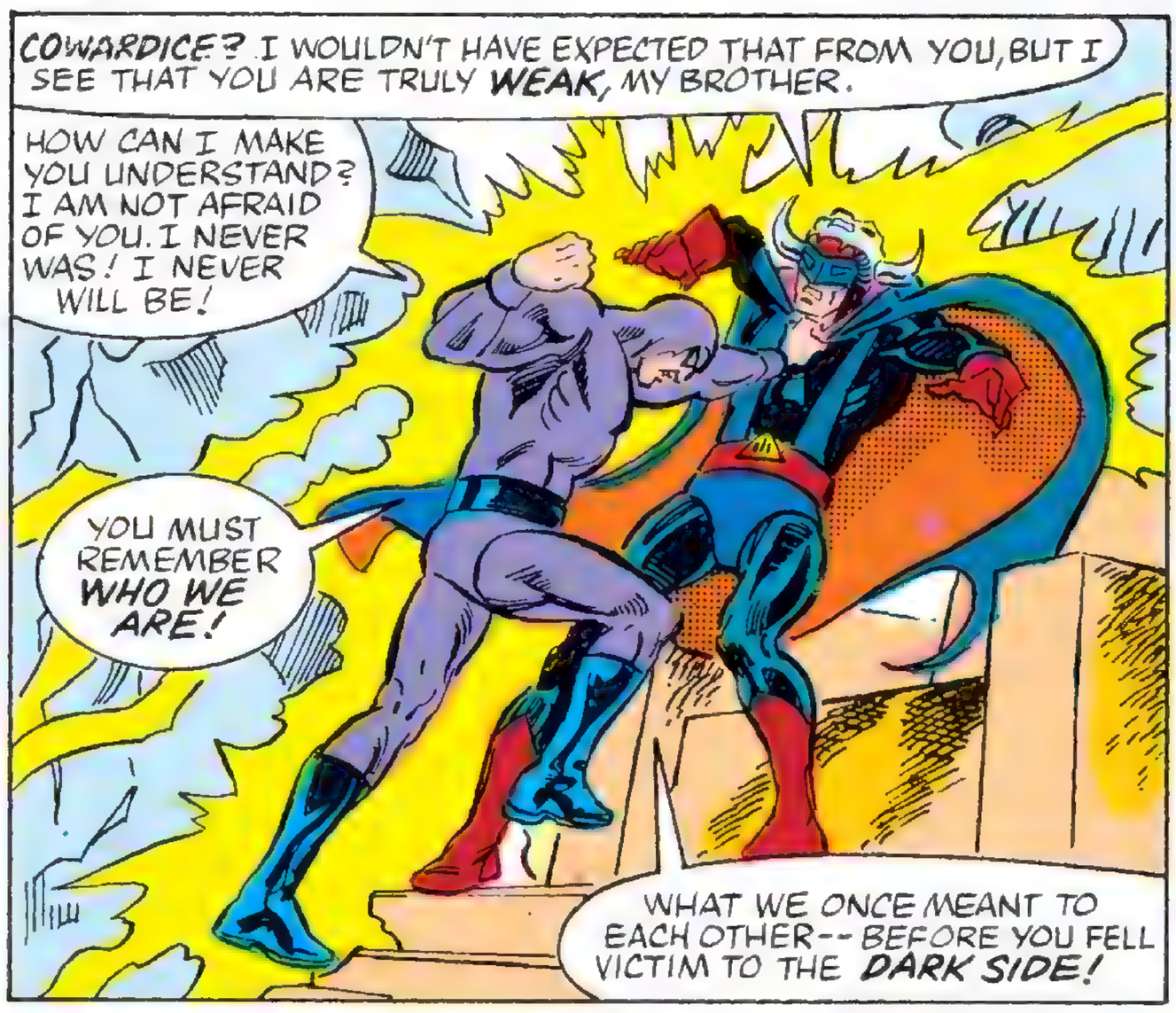

WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT FLEEING?
I'M COMING FOR YOU--AND THERE'S NOTHING THAT CAN STOP ME!
NOTHING?
IT APPEARS YOU ARE WRONG AGAIN!
WHAT'S THIS? TIRING ALREADY? I EXPECTED MORE FROM YOU, DEAR BROTHER!
AND WE ALL EXPECTED SO MUCH MORE FROM YOU, KURT!
THINGS SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO GET THIS BAD.
ONCE THE BANDAR WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD TO ACCEPT YOU AS FRIEND AND LEADER. BUT YOU HAVE CHANGED. YOU HAVE BEEN SEDUCED BY TERRIBLE FORCES.
YOU NEED HELP--HELP THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN YEARS AGO!
SUCH PETTY THOUGHTS, YOU PITIFUL WRETCH!
CAN YOU NOT SEE THAT I AM FAR BEYOND THAT NOW?

I AM POWER!!
I AM YOUR DEATH!
KLLLAPET

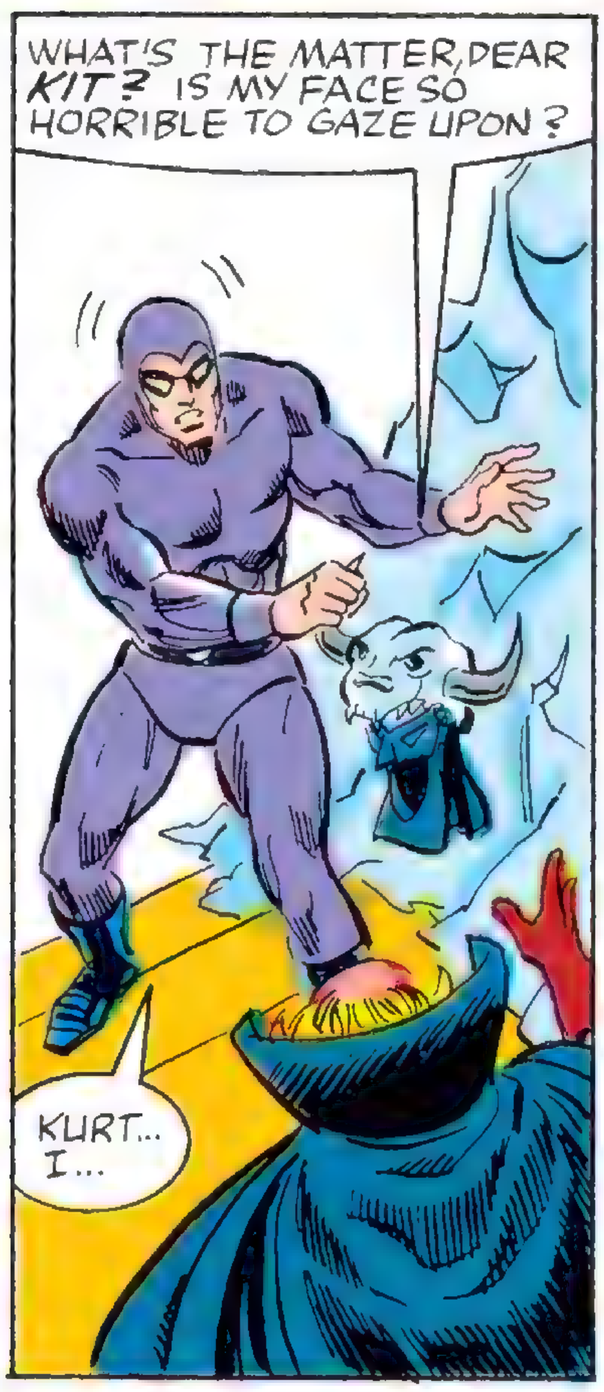
NO! THERE IS NO WAY YOU CAN DEFEAT ME, FOR MINE IS THE POWER OF OUR FOREFATHERS! POWER THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOUR OWN HAD YOU FOLLOWED THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS INSTEAD OF EVIL!
I WILL SUMMON THE STRENGTH OF TEN TIGERS...

... AND I WILL REACH YOU, KURT!
IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MAKE AMENDS FOR THINGS THAT HAVE OCCURED IN THE PAST.

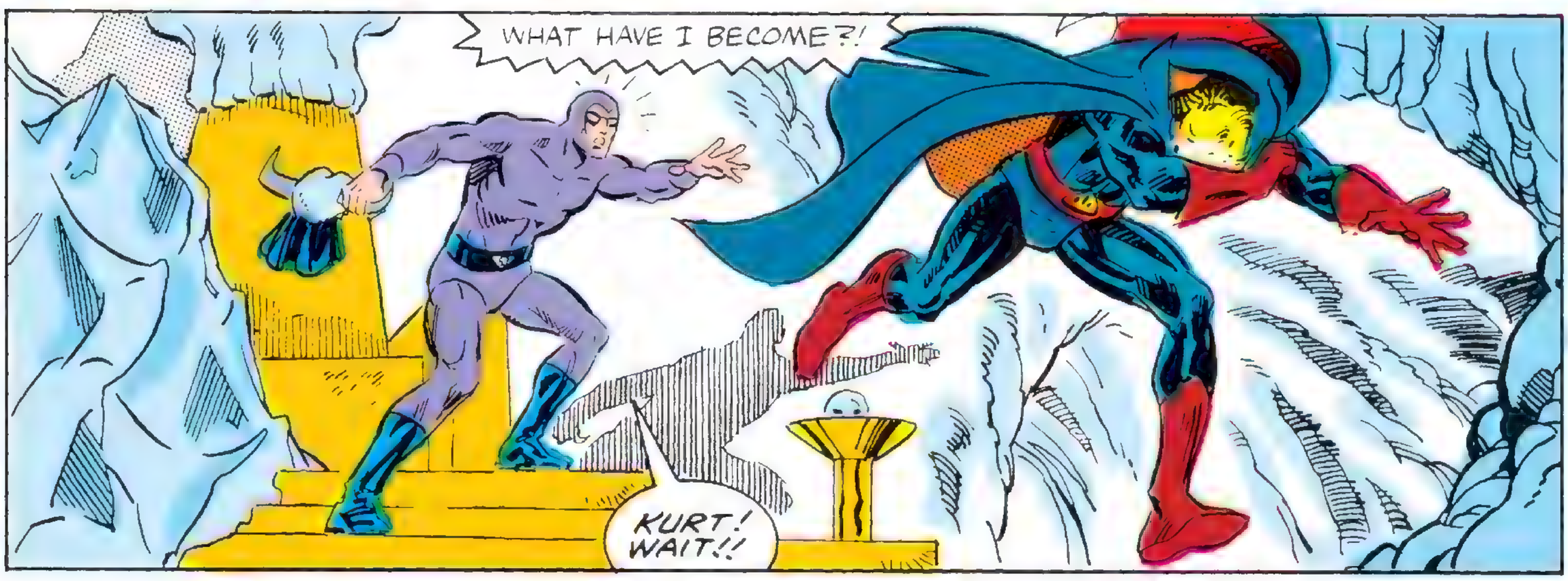
THERE IS NO NEED FOR US TO FIGHT!


COWARDICE? I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED THAT FROM YOU, BUT I SEE THAT YOU ARE TRULY WEAK, MY BROTHER.
HOW CAN I MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND? I AM NOT AFRAID OF YOU. I NEVER WAS! I NEVER WILL BE!
YOU MUST REMEMBER WHO WE ARE!
WHAT WE ONCE MEANT TO EACH OTHER-- BEFORE YOU FELL VICTIM TO THE DARK SIDE!

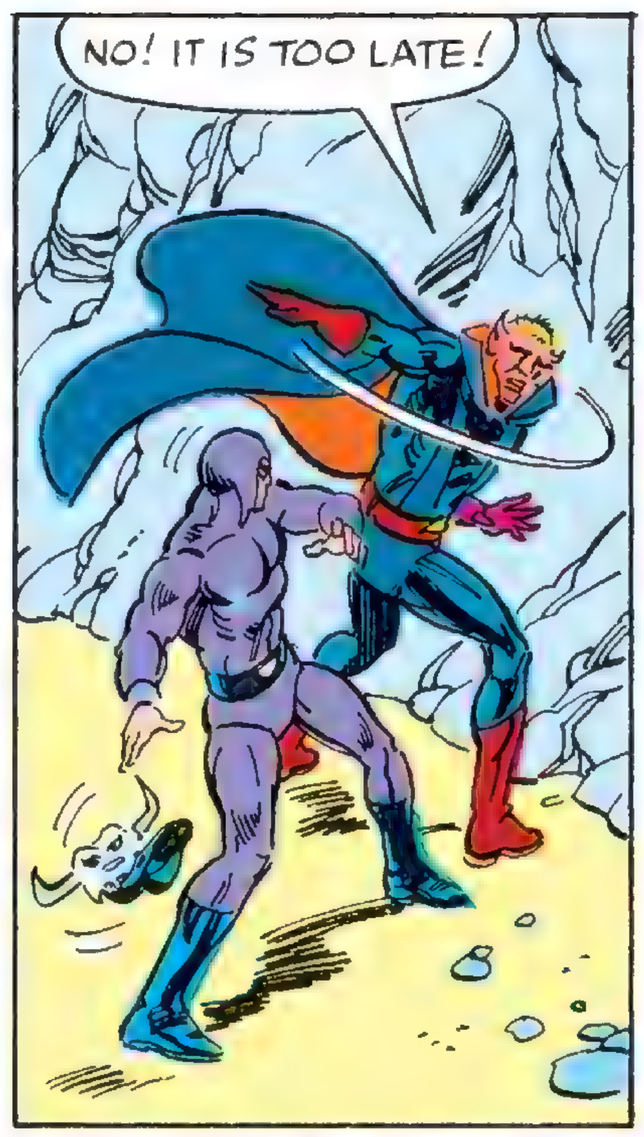
YOU ARE KURT WALKER--MY OWN FLESH AND BLOOD!


WHAT'S THE MATTER, DEAR KIT? IS MY FACE SO HORRIBLE TO GAZE UPON?
KURT... I...

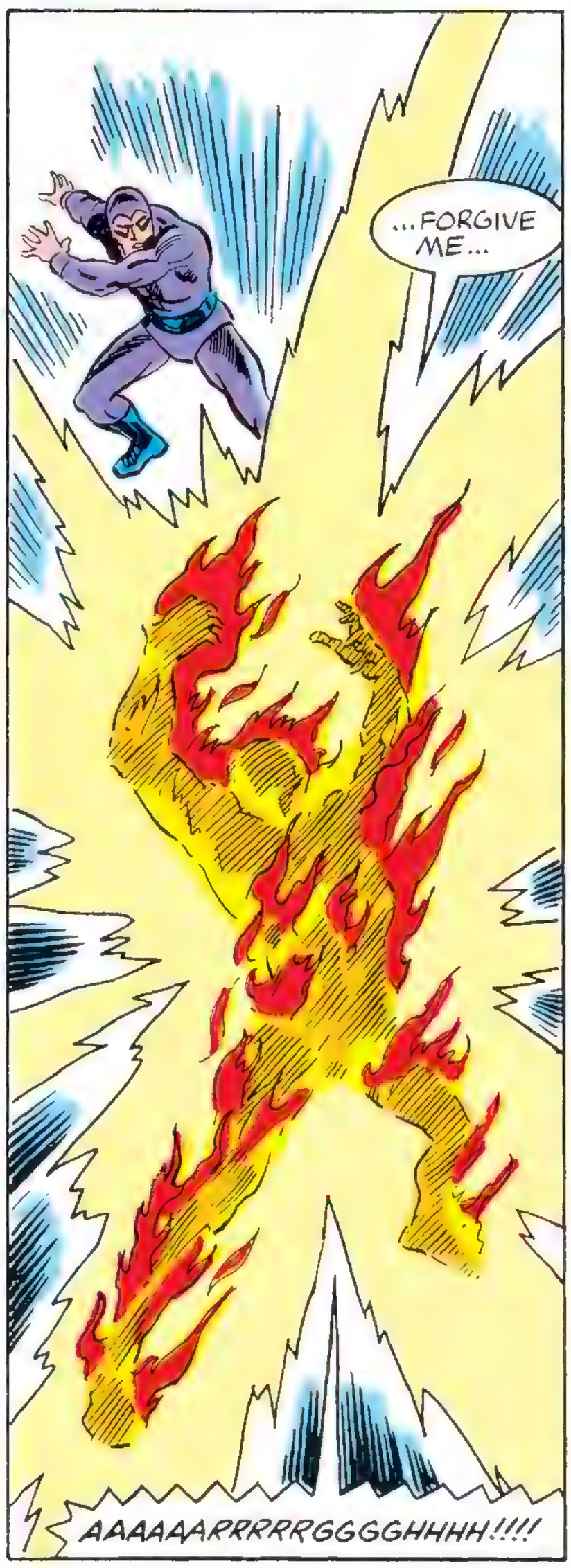
WHAT HAS HAPPENED?!
NO! NO!!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?

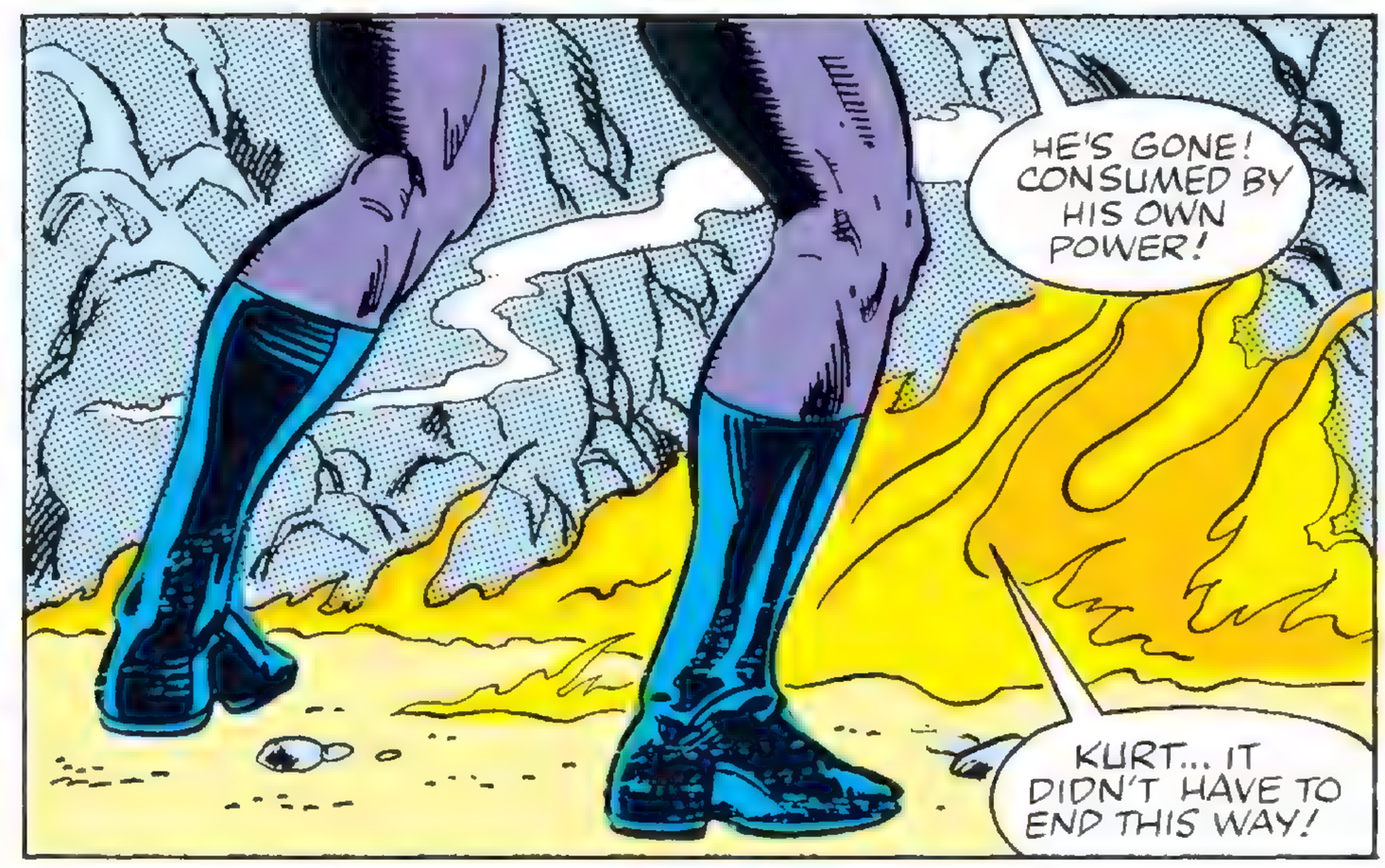

WHAT HAVE I BECOME?!
KURT! WAIT!!

KURT, LISTEN TO ME. EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT.
WE CAN HELP YOU-- THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH WILL FIND A WAY! I PROMISE YOU!

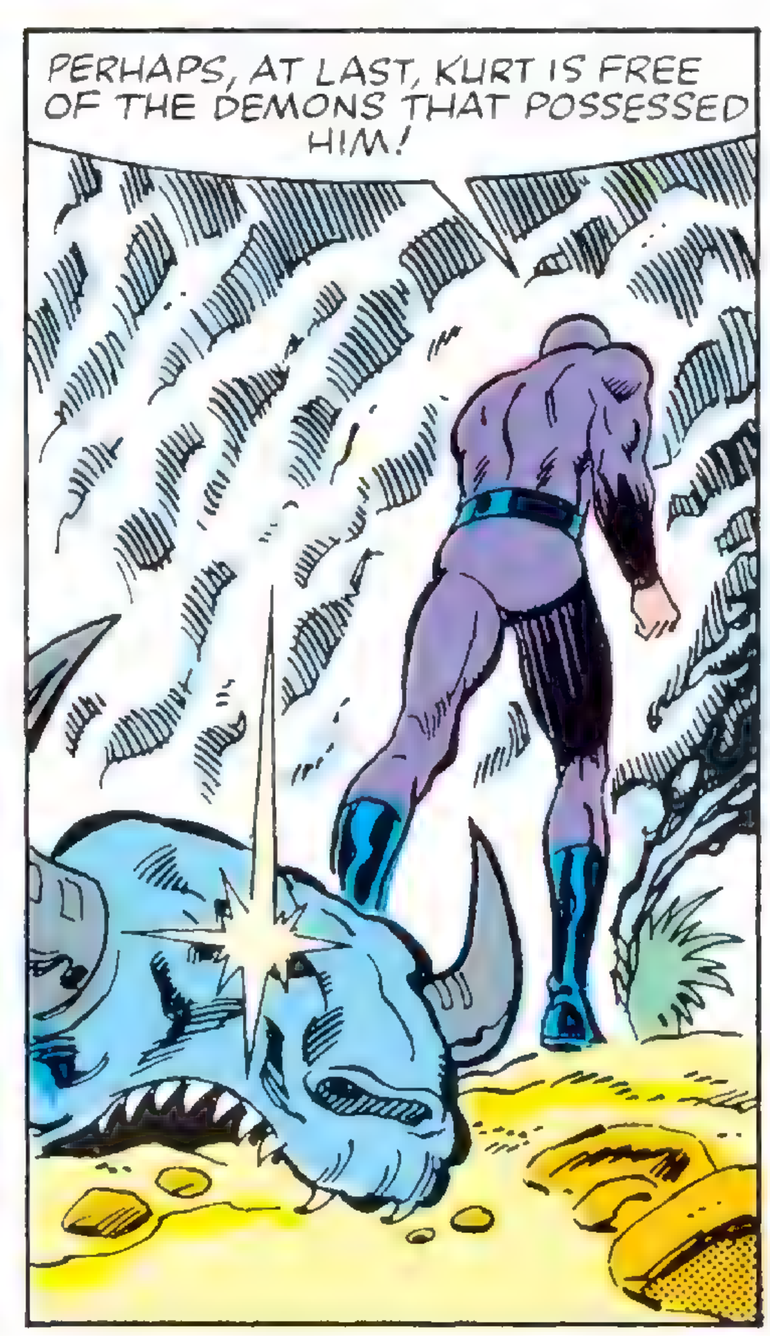

NO! IT IS TOO LATE!

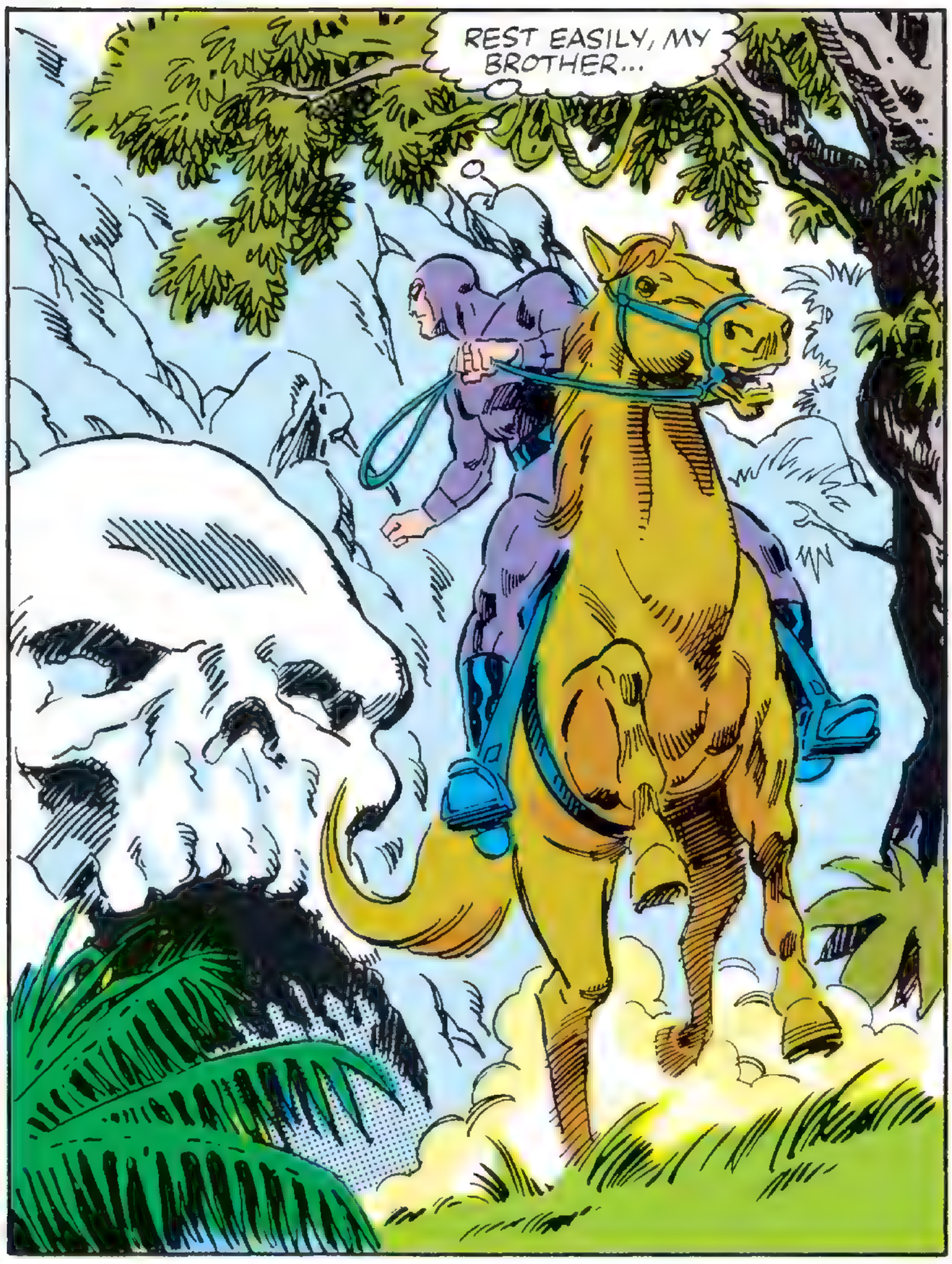
NO ONE CAN HELP ME NOW, NOT EVEN MYSELF!
IT IS OVER!..

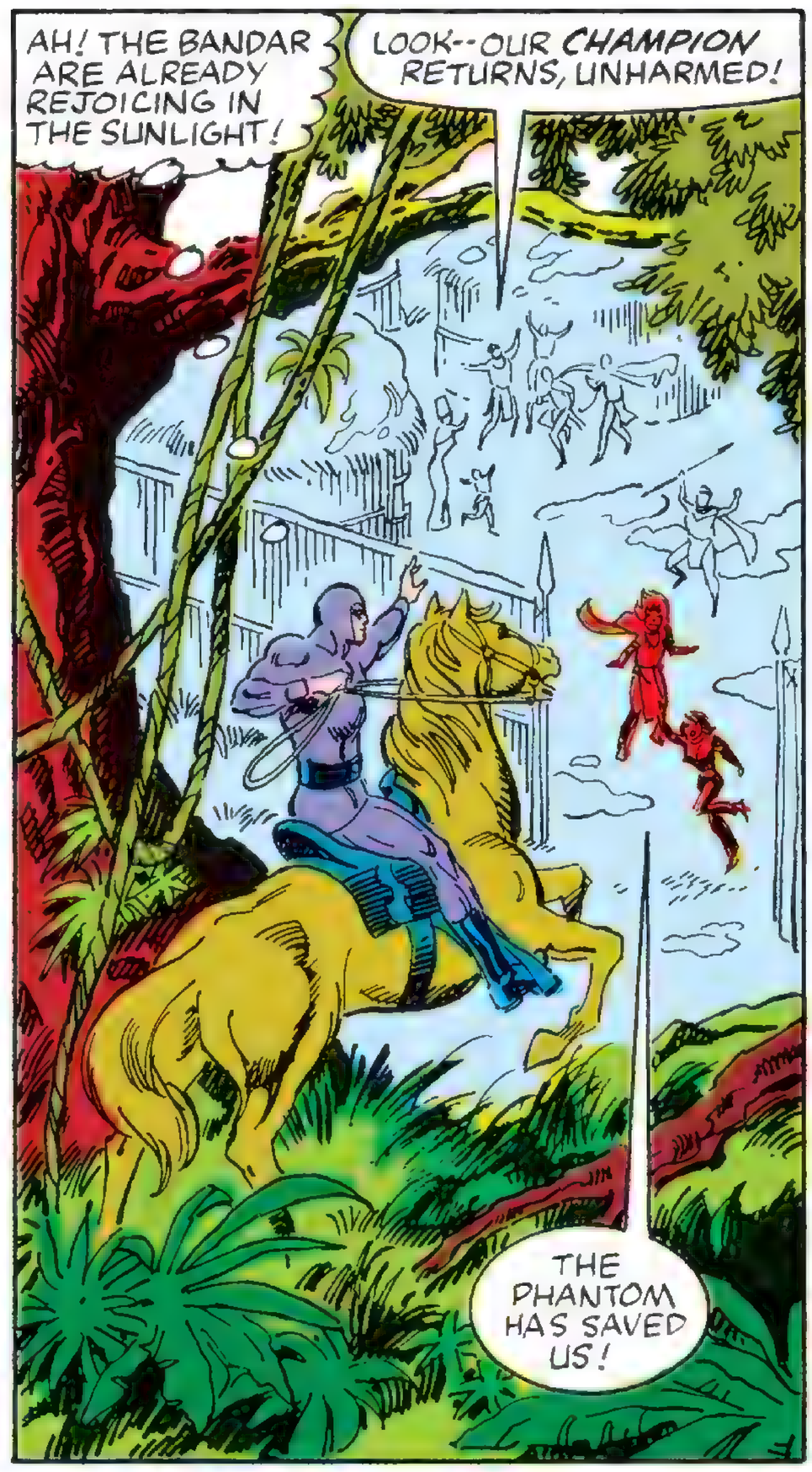

...FORGIVE ME...
AAAAAARRRRRGGGGHHHH!!!!

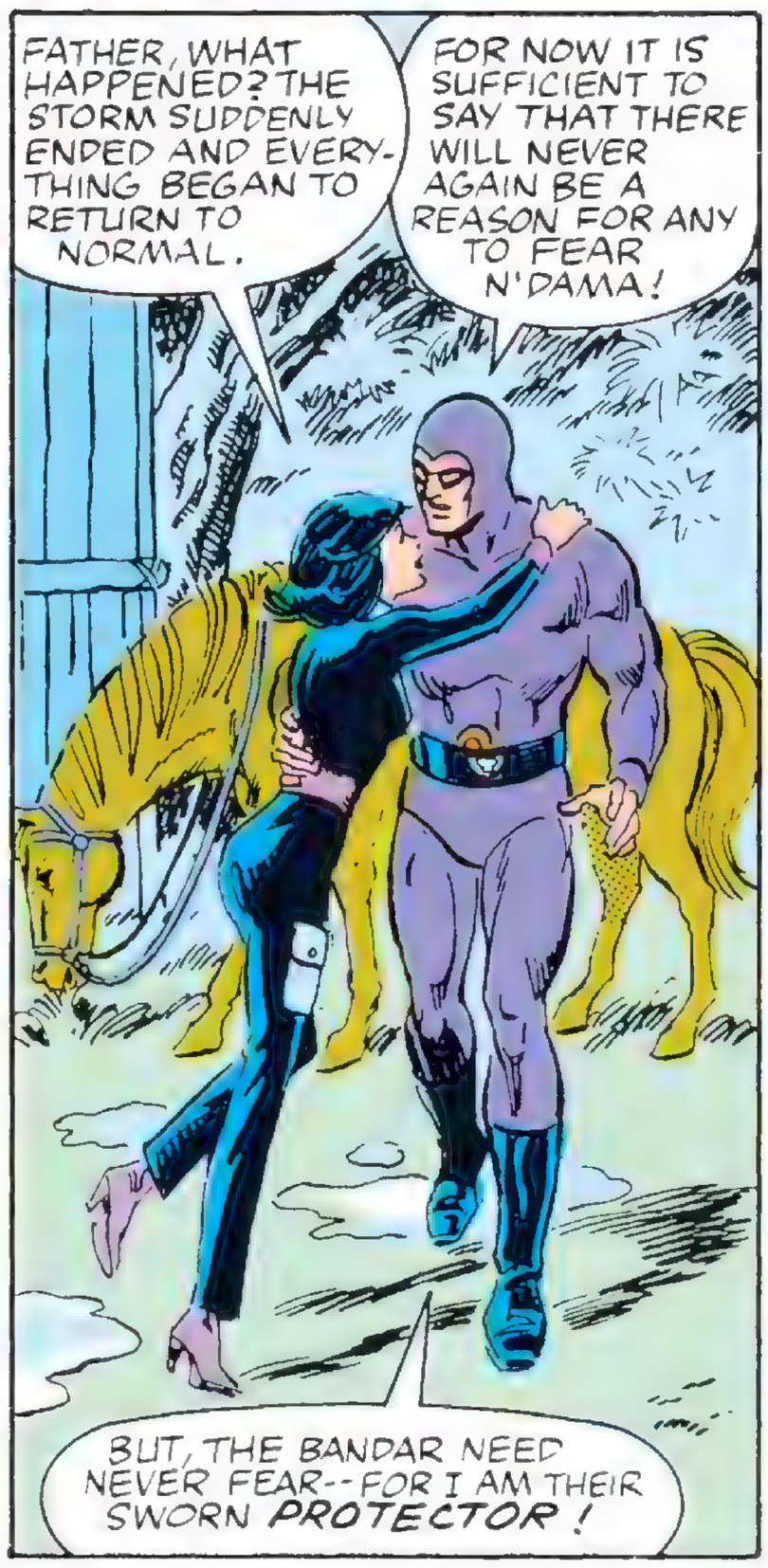

HE'S GONE! CONSUMED BY HIS OWN POWER!
KURT... IT DIDN'T HAVE TO END THIS WAY!

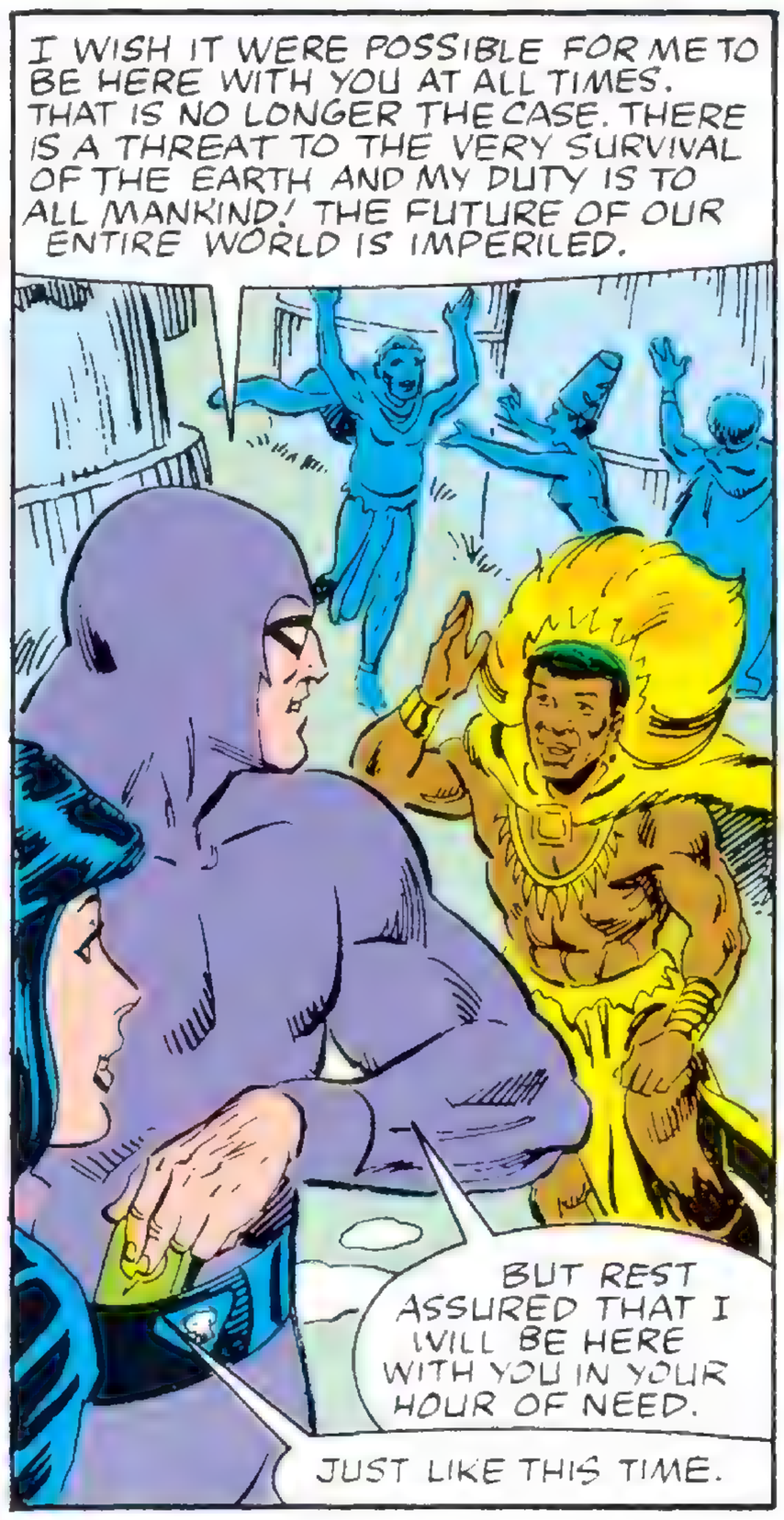
I FEEL A STRANGE SENSE OF EMPTINESS... PERHAPS, THE MOURNING SHOULD TRULY HAVE BEGUN LONG AGO-- WHEN KURT FIRST TURNED HIS HEART TOWARD EVIL.


PERHAPS, AT LAST, KURT IS FREE OF THE DEMONS THAT POSSESSED HIM!


REST EASILY, MY BROTHER...

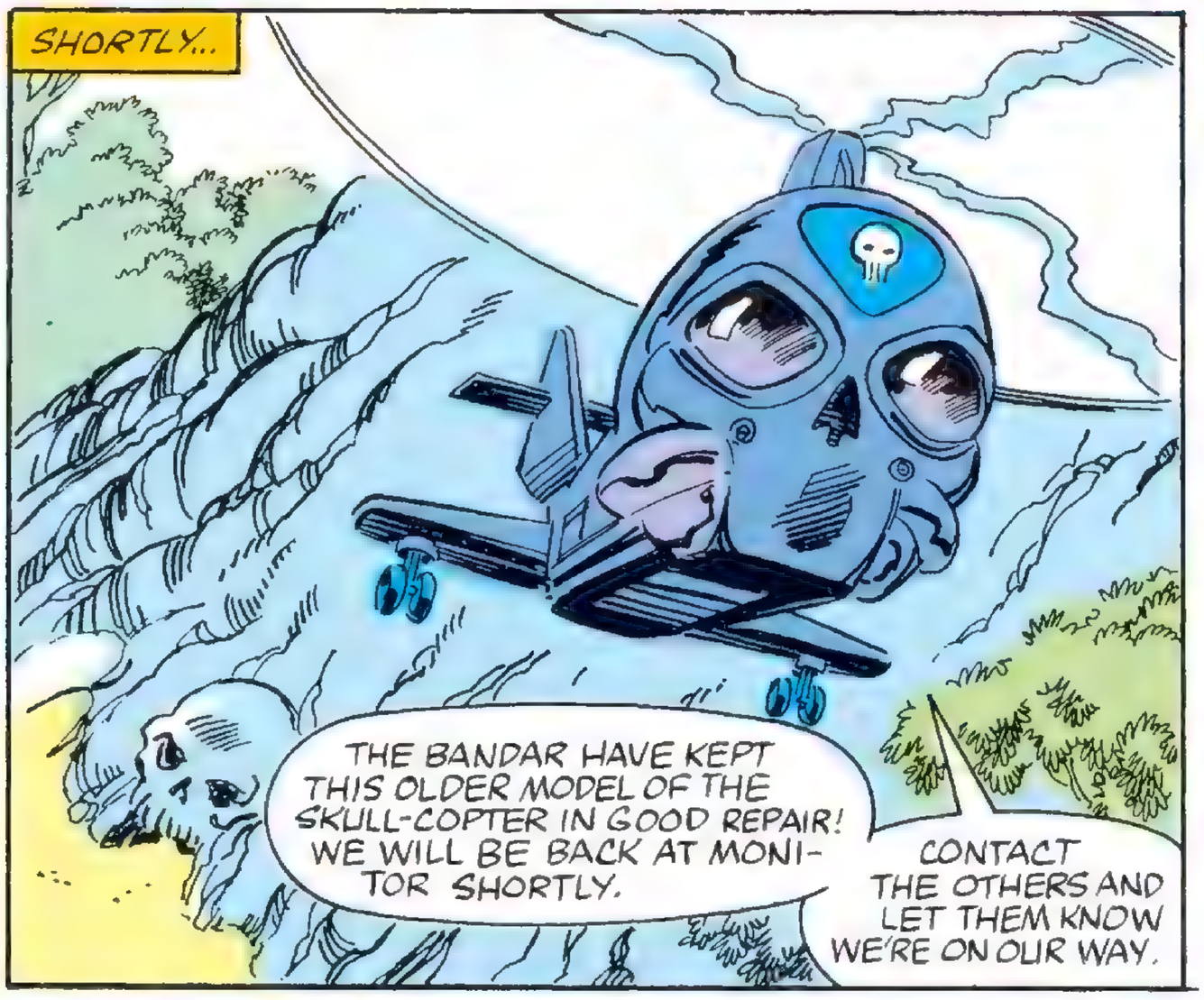

AH! THE BANDAR ARE ALREADY REJOICING IN THE SUNLIGHT!
LOOK--OUR CHAMPION RETURNS, UNHARMED!
THE PHANTOM HAS SAVED US!

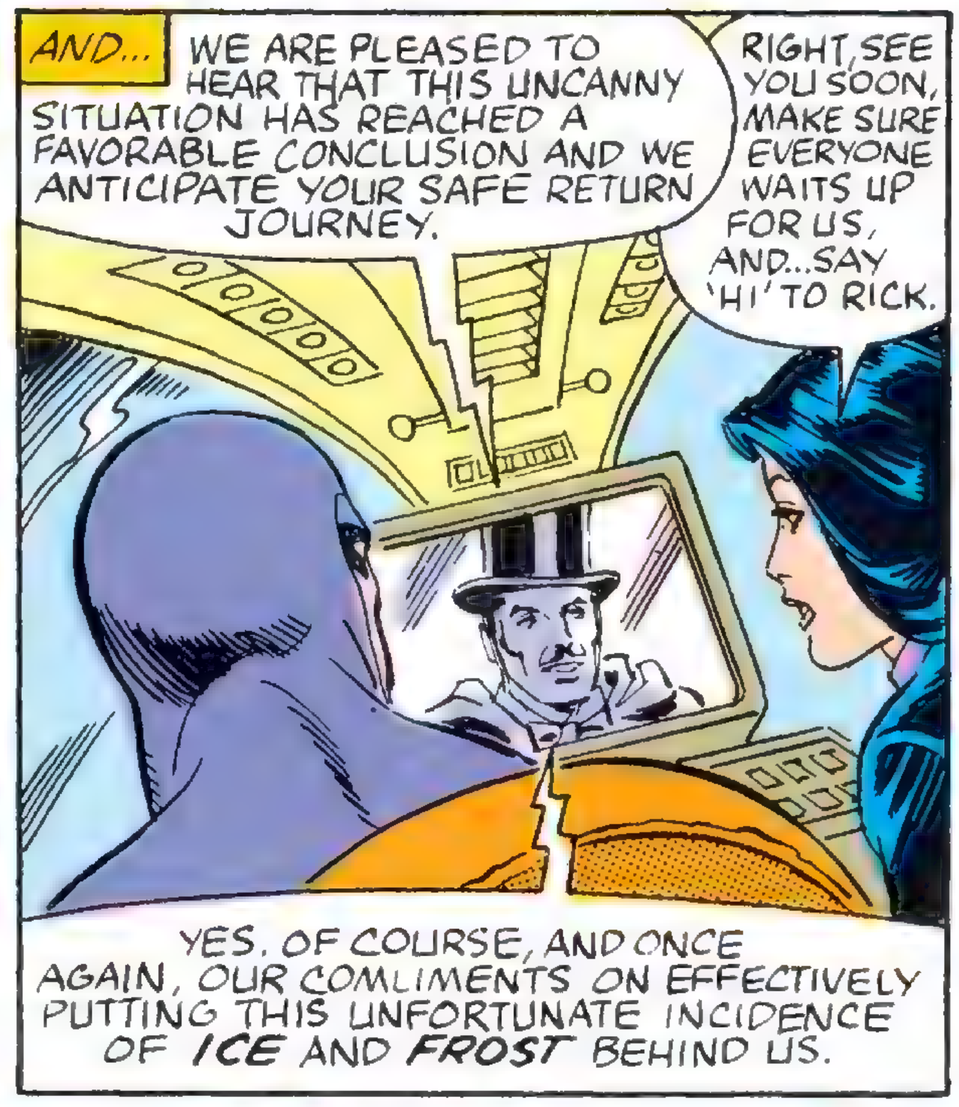

FATHER, WHAT HAPPENED? THE STORM SUDDENLY ENDED AND EVERYTHING BEGAN TO RETURN TO NORMAL.
FOR NOW IT IS SUFFICIENT TO SAY THAT THERE WILL NEVER AGAIN BE A REASON FOR ANY TO FEAR N'DAMA!
BUT, THE BANDAR NEED NEVER FEAR--FOR I AM THEIR SWORN PROTECTOR!

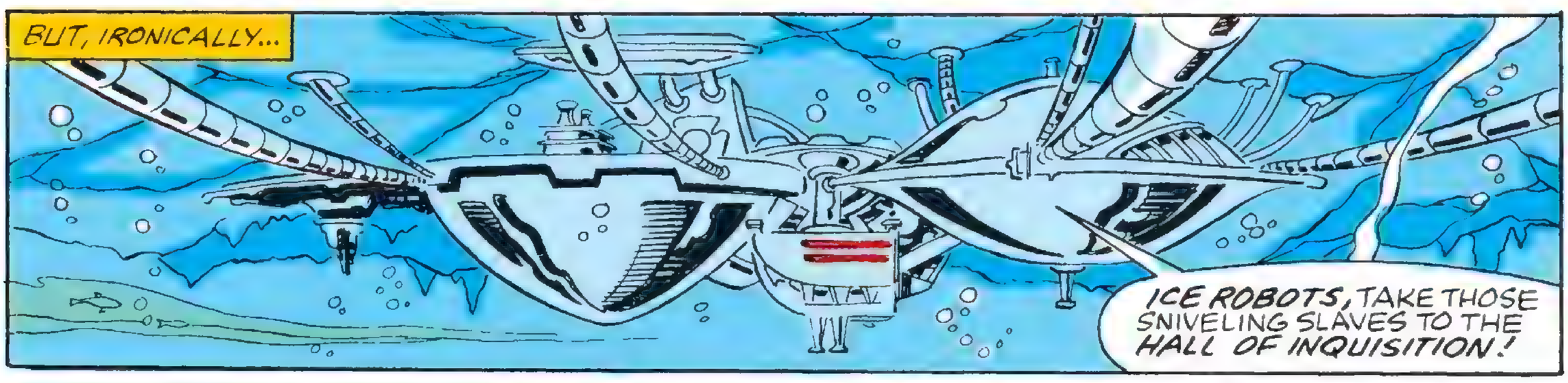

I WISH IT WERE POSSIBLE FOR ME TO BE HERE WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES. THAT IS NO LONGER THE CASE. THERE IS A THREAT TO THE VERY SURVIVAL OF THE EARTH AND MY DUTY IS TO ALL MANKIND! THE FUTURE OF OUR ENTIRE WORLD IS IMPERILED.
BUT REST ASSURED THAT I WILL BE HERE WITH YOU IN YOUR HOUR OF NEED.
JUST LIKE THIS TIME.

EXCEPT, GURAN, IN THE FUTURE YOU WILL HAVE THIS--A COMMUNICATION DEVICE WHICH WILL ENABLE YOU TO CONTACT US DIRECTLY AT MONITOR SHOULD THE OCCASION ARISE!

REMEMBER, OUR HEARTS WILL ALWAYS BE AMONG YOU!
AND, NOW, OLD FRIEND, IT IS TIME FOR JEDDA AND ME TO RETURN TO OUR NEW HOME.
OUR WORK HERE IS DONE.
FAREWELL. LONG LIVE THE DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH


SHORTLY...
THE BANDAR HAVE KEPT THIS OLDER MODEL OF THE SKULL-COPTER IN GOOD REPAIR! WE WILL BE BACK AT MONITOR SHORTLY.
CONTACT THE OTHERS AND LET THEM KNOW WE'RE ON OUR WAY.


AND...
WE ARE PLEASED TO HEAR THAT THIS UNCANNY SITUATION HAS REACHED A FAVORABLE CONCLUSION AND WE ANTICIPATE YOUR SAFE RETURN JOURNEY.
RIGHT, SEE YOU SOON, MAKE SURE EVERYONE WAITS UP FOR US, AND...SAY 'HI' TO RICK.
YES. OF COURSE, AND ONCE AGAIN, OUR COMLIMENTS ON EFFECTIVELY PUTTING THIS UNFORTUNATE INCIDENCE OF ICE AND FROST BEHIND US.


BUT, IRONICALLY...
ICE ROBOTS, TAKE THOSE SNIVELING SLAVES TO THE HALL OF INQUISITION!

THERE THEY WILL BE PREPARED FOR THE TRANSITION!
A GREAT HONOR IS ABOUT TO BE BESTOWED UPON THEM.

THEY WILL BECOME MINDLESS DRONES, EXISTING SOLELY TO DO THE BIDDING OF MING THE MERCILESS!
THE CONQUEST OF EARTH WILL BE ASSURED--

--BY THIS ARMY OF MEN OF FROST!
NEXT: A MENACE TO MATCH THE MAGIC OF
MANDRAKE

TE!

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# MAGICAL CHILD

YOU KIDS HAVE A GOOD TIME, YOU HEAR ?

WE WILL, *LOTHAR!* UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU NEED US FOR SOMETHING. WE COULD ALWAYS CATCH A LATER SHOW IF YOU'D LIKE US TO STAY BEHIND AND LEND A HAND-- MAYBE A COUPLE OF HANDS.

YEAH, I'LL GIVE IT MY BEST SHOT.

NEVER YOU WORRY, *RICK... JEDDA*. YOU JUST HAVE A GOOD TIME AT THE *GEE-DEE VIDEO LASER CONCERT.*

OKAY, LOTHAR, BUT YOU'VE GOT A STANDING OFFER. I'D LOVE TO WORK ON AN OLD RELIC LIKE THIS.

BUT NOT RIGHT NOW! WHEW!

LATER!

HEH-HEH. KIDS TODAY!

YEAH...KIDS. FLASH GORDON MUST BE PROUD OF HIS BOY, I WISH MY OWN SON, L.J. WOULD SHOW AS MUCH INTEREST IN THE WORK I DO. BUT, I GUESS THERE'S ALWAYS BEEN A SORT OF DISTANCE BETWEEN US. I WISH HE COULD BE MORE LIKE...

AH FORGET IT!

COME ON, *MANDRAKE!* TELL ME! I HAVE TO KNOW!

YOU MUST LEARN TO BE PATIENT, *KSHIN!*

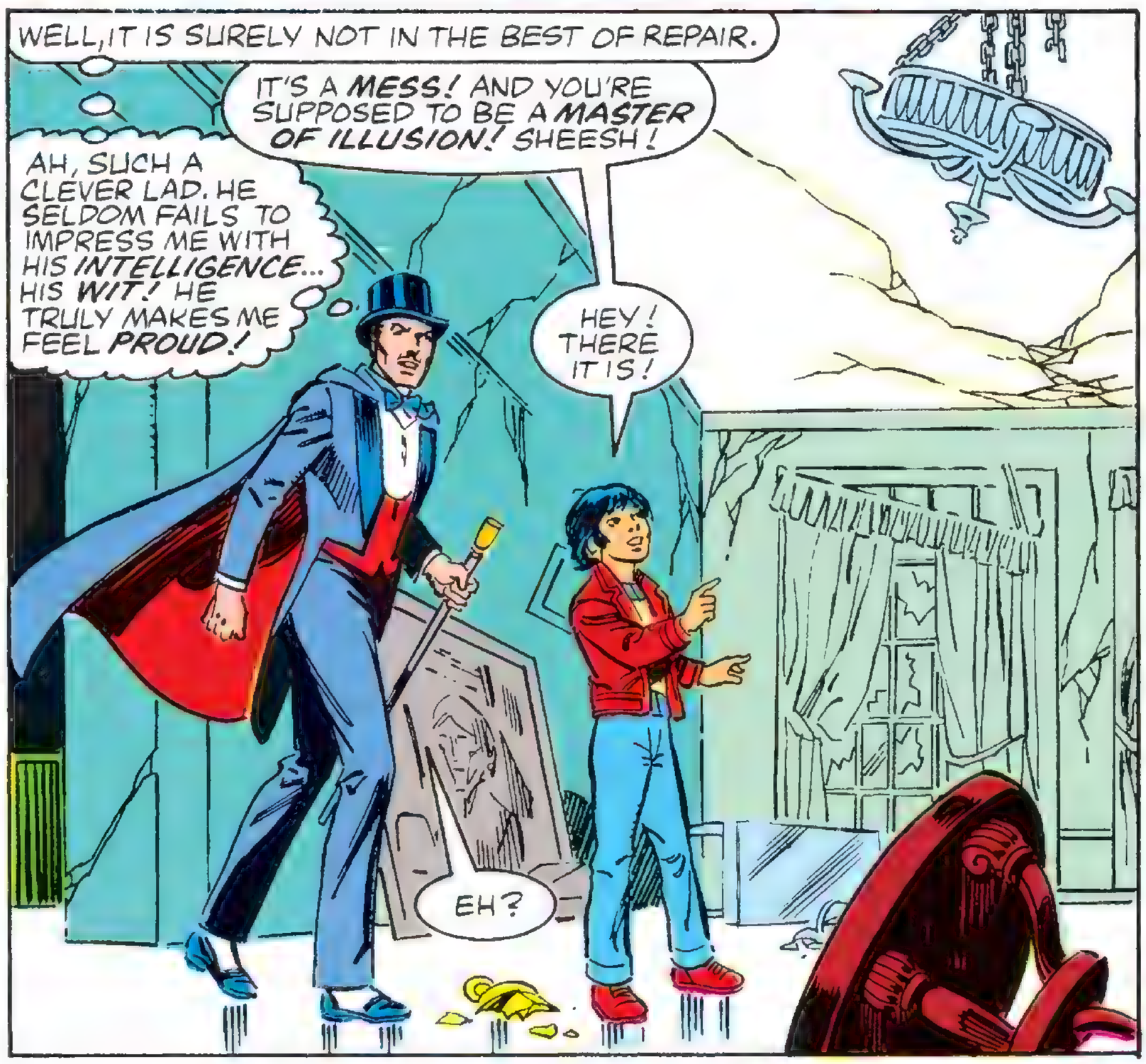

MICHAEL HIGGINS / ALEX SAVIUK — WRITER--CO-PLOTTERS--ARTIST
FRED FREDERICKS — INKS
KEN LOPEZ — LETTERER
NEL YOMTOV — COLORIST
HOWARD MACKIE — EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO / JIM SHOOTER — OVERSEERS

OH, COME ON! I'M BEING PATIENT! I'M BEING PATIENT! YOU JUST GOTTA TELL ME WHY WE'RE HERE!
WELL, IF YOU'RE NOT HERE FOR ANYTHING ELSE, I CAN USE ALL THE HELP I CAN GET.
REALLY, LOTHAR?! CAN I...?!

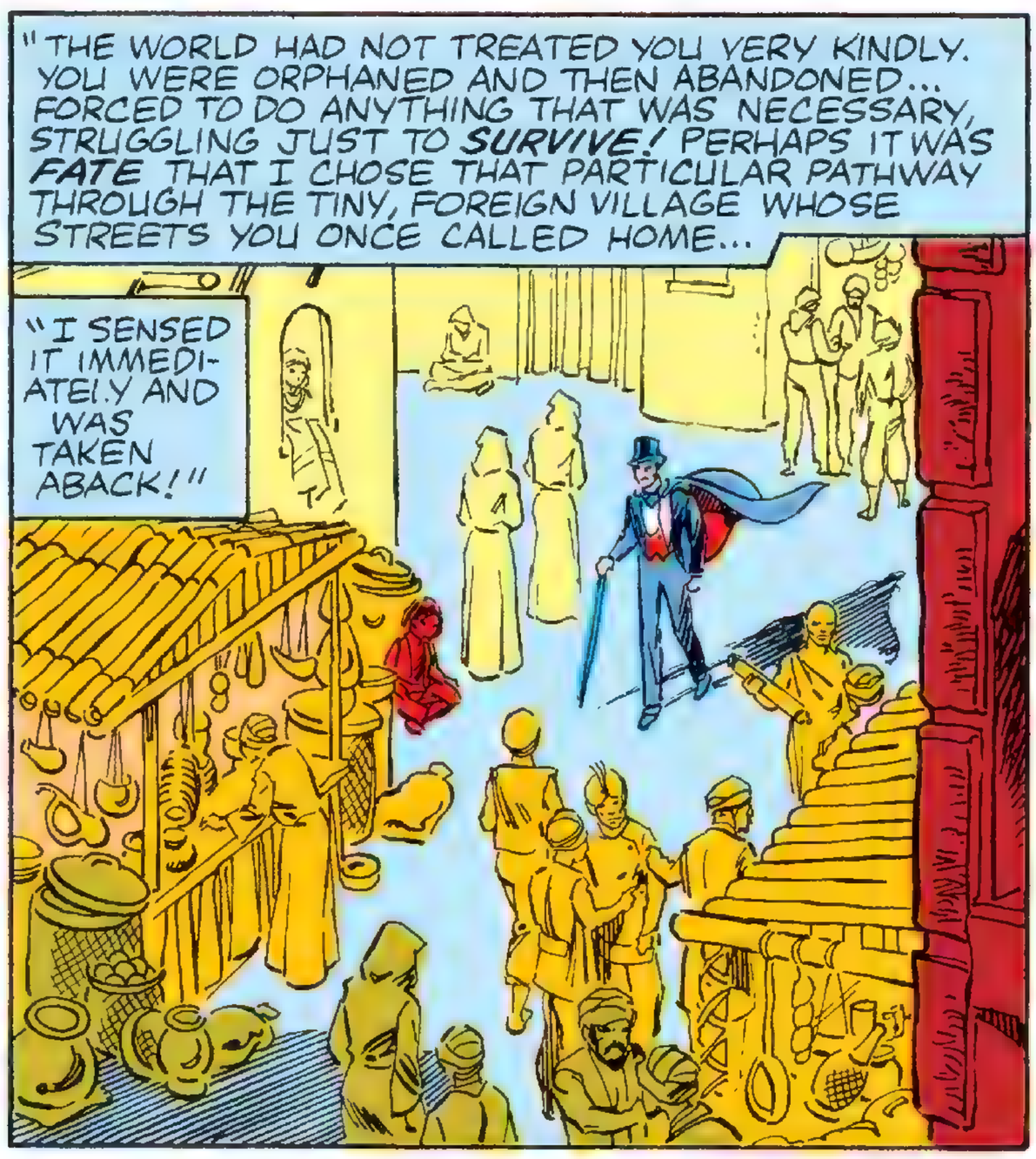
NO, YOU MAY NOT!!
AND I SHOULD THINK YOU WOULD BE WELL AWARE OF THAT, LOTHAR! DO NOT TEMPT HIM!
B-BUT...

I'M SORRY, SON, BUT THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR THE FRIVOLOUS WAYS OF YOUTH!
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF MANHOOD ARE BECKONING.
I WAS JUST TRYING TO HAVE SOME FUN.

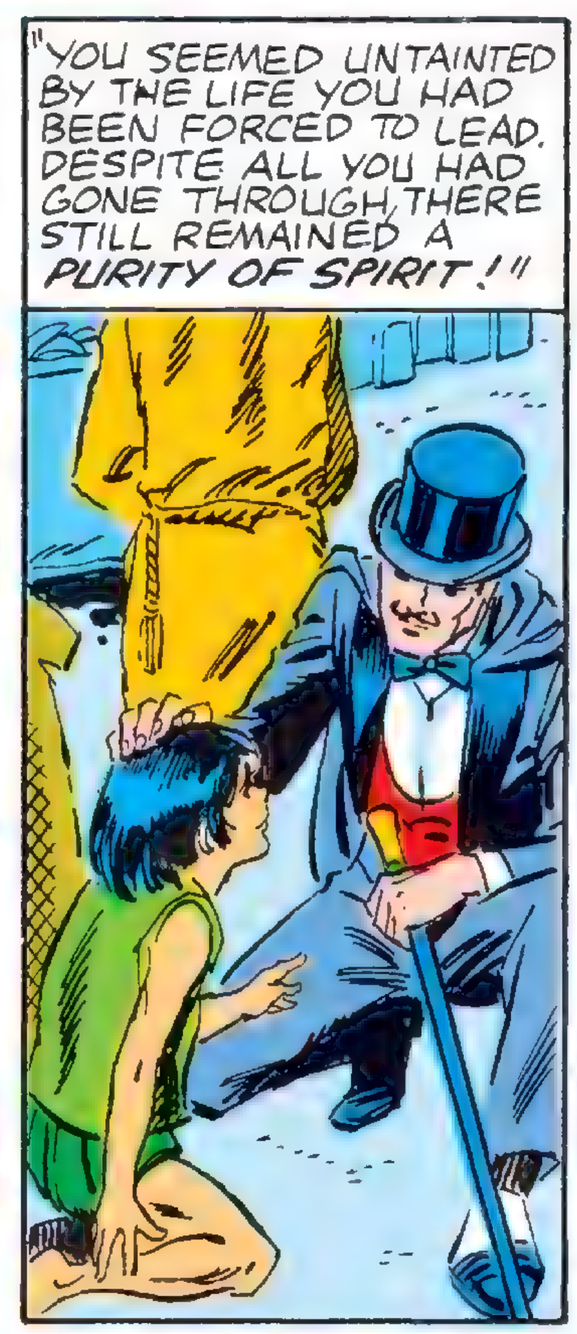
SOMEDAY, I HOPE, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND. I'M DOING ALL THIS FOR YOU. WHAT WE DO HERE TODAY WILL AFFECT THE OUTCOME OF YOUR ENTIRE LIFE.
NOW COME ALONG. THERE IS NO REASON TO BE SO GRIM!
I THOUGHT OUR HOME WAS RUINED FOREVER!


WELL, IT IS SURELY NOT IN THE BEST OF REPAIR.
IT'S A MESS! AND YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A MASTER OF ILLUSION! SHEESH!
AH, SUCH A CLEVER LAD. HE SELDOM FAILS TO IMPRESS ME WITH HIS INTELLIGENCE... HIS WIT! HE TRULY MAKES ME FEEL PROUD!
HEY! THERE IT IS!
EH?

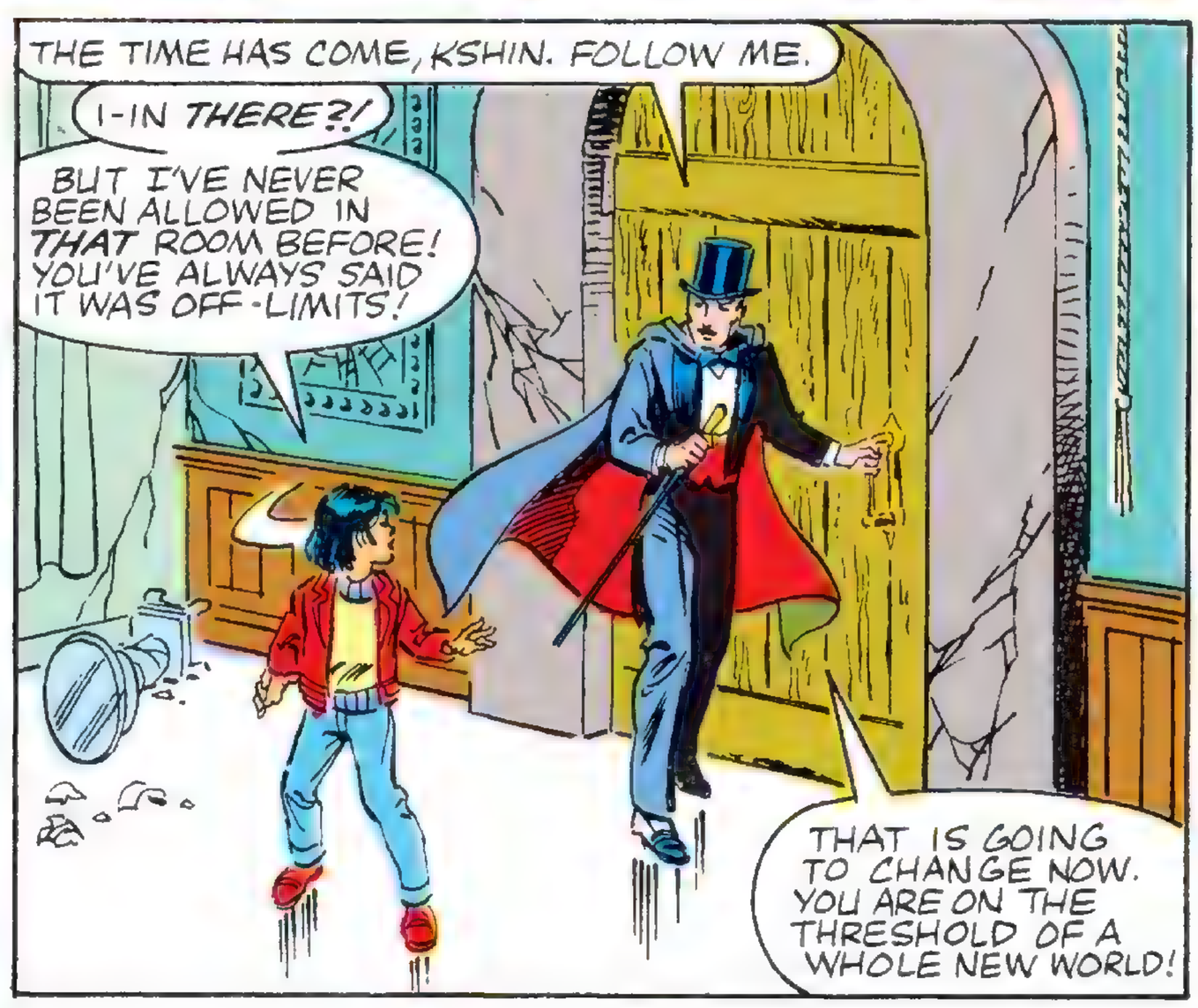
I'M GLAD NOTHING HAPPENED TO THIS. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF MY FAVORITES! IT'S SOMETHING SPECIAL.
SOMETHING SPECIAL... HMMMMM, INDEED! JUST LIKE YOU.
BUT THEN, I SENSED THAT ABOUT YOU THE MOMENT I FIRST SAW YOU.

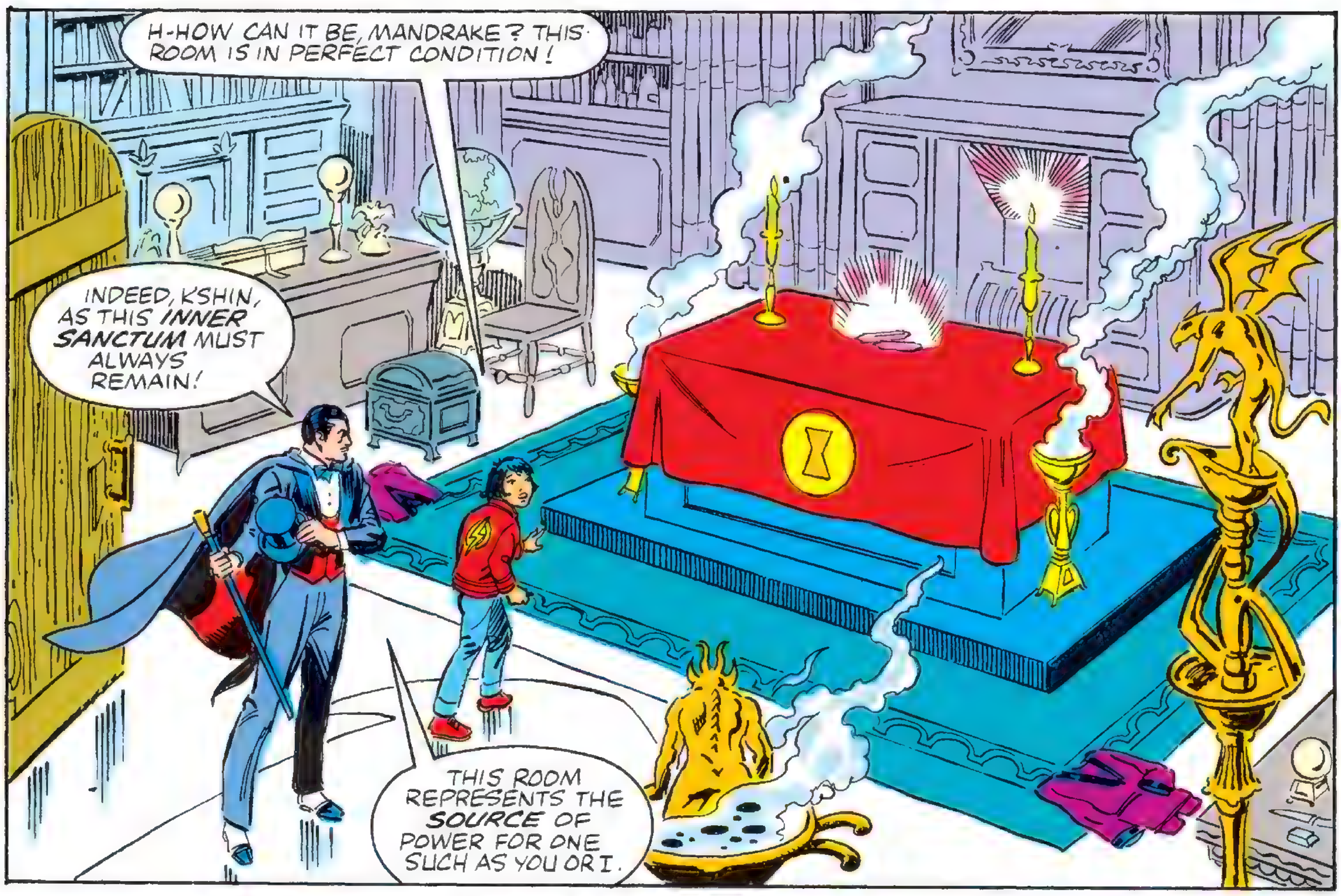

"THE WORLD HAD NOT TREATED YOU VERY KINDLY. YOU WERE ORPHANED AND THEN ABANDONED... FORCED TO DO ANYTHING THAT WAS NECESSARY, STRUGGLING JUST TO SURVIVE! PERHAPS IT WAS FATE THAT I CHOSE THAT PARTICULAR PATHWAY THROUGH THE TINY, FOREIGN VILLAGE WHOSE STREETS YOU ONCE CALLED HOME...
"I SENSED IT IMMEDIATELY AND WAS TAKEN ABACK!"

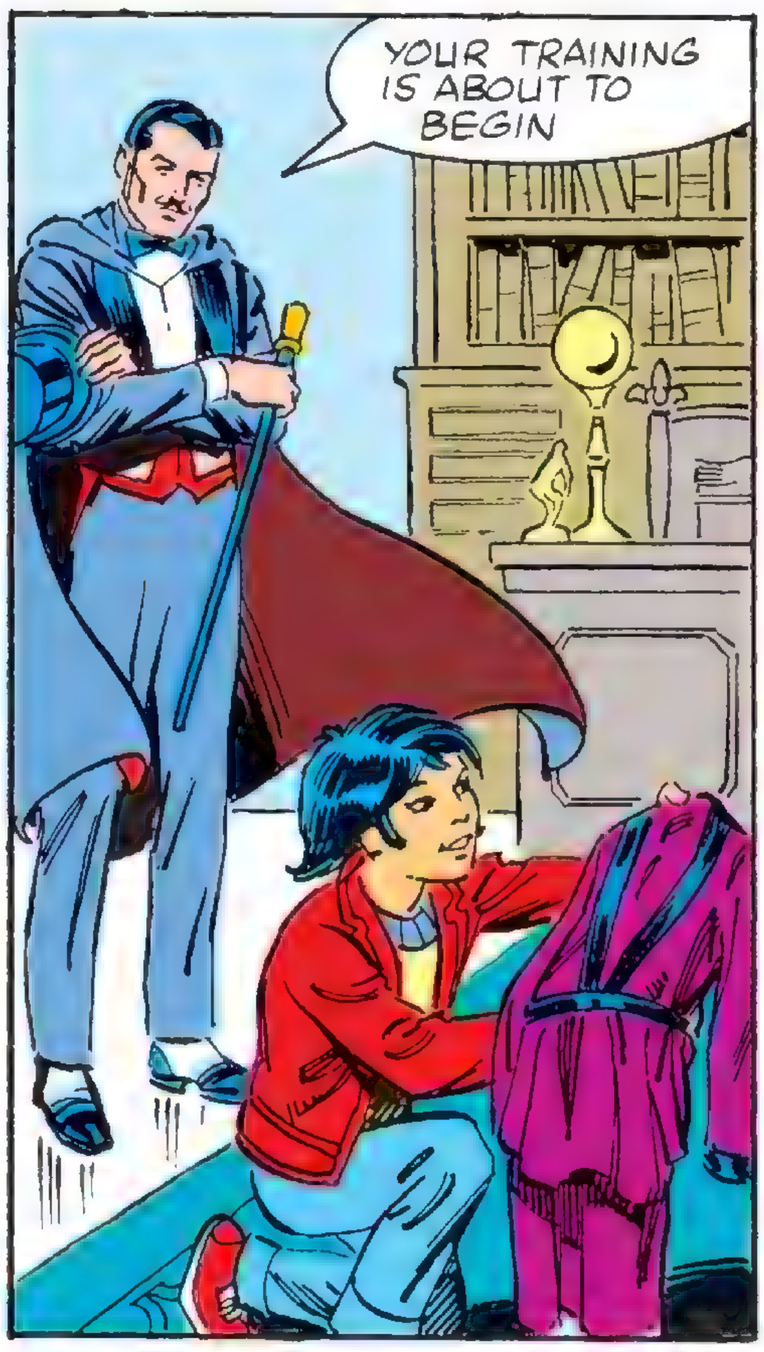
SUCH RAW, INTENSE PSYCHIC ENERGY EMANATING FROM THE PRESENCE OF THIS STREETWISE ORPHAN! HOW CAN THIS BE?


"YOU SEEMED UNTAINTED BY THE LIFE YOU HAD BEEN FORCED TO LEAD. DESPITE ALL YOU HAD GONE THROUGH, THERE STILL REMAINED A PURITY OF SPIRIT!"

I KNEW AT ONCE WHAT I MUST DO. IT WOULD BE MY RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE THAT YOUR ABILITIES WERE PROPERLY HONED.
THUS, I DECIDED TO ACCEPT YOU AS MY OWN... AND I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS DAY EVER SINCE!

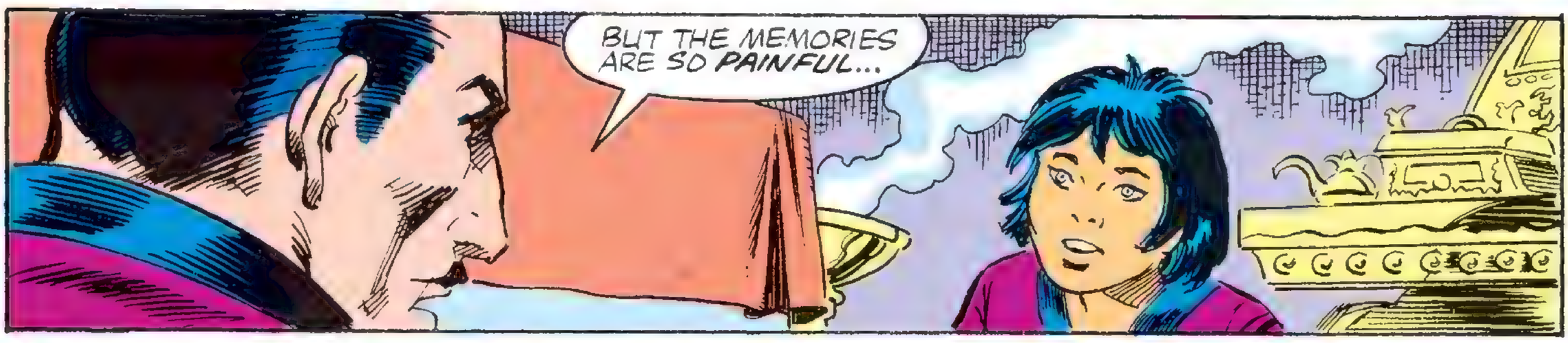

THE TIME HAS COME, KSHIN. FOLLOW ME.
I-IN THERE?!
BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN ALLOWED IN THAT ROOM BEFORE! YOU'VE ALWAYS SAID IT WAS OFF-LIMITS!
THAT IS GOING TO CHANGE NOW. YOU ARE ON THE THRESHOLD OF A WHOLE NEW WORLD!


H-HOW CAN IT BE, MANDRAKE? THIS ROOM IS IN PERFECT CONDITION!
INDEED, K'SHIN, AS THIS INNER SANCTUM MUST ALWAYS REMAIN!
THIS ROOM REPRESENTS THE SOURCE OF POWER FOR ONE SUCH AS YOU OR I.


YOUR TRAINING IS ABOUT TO BEGIN

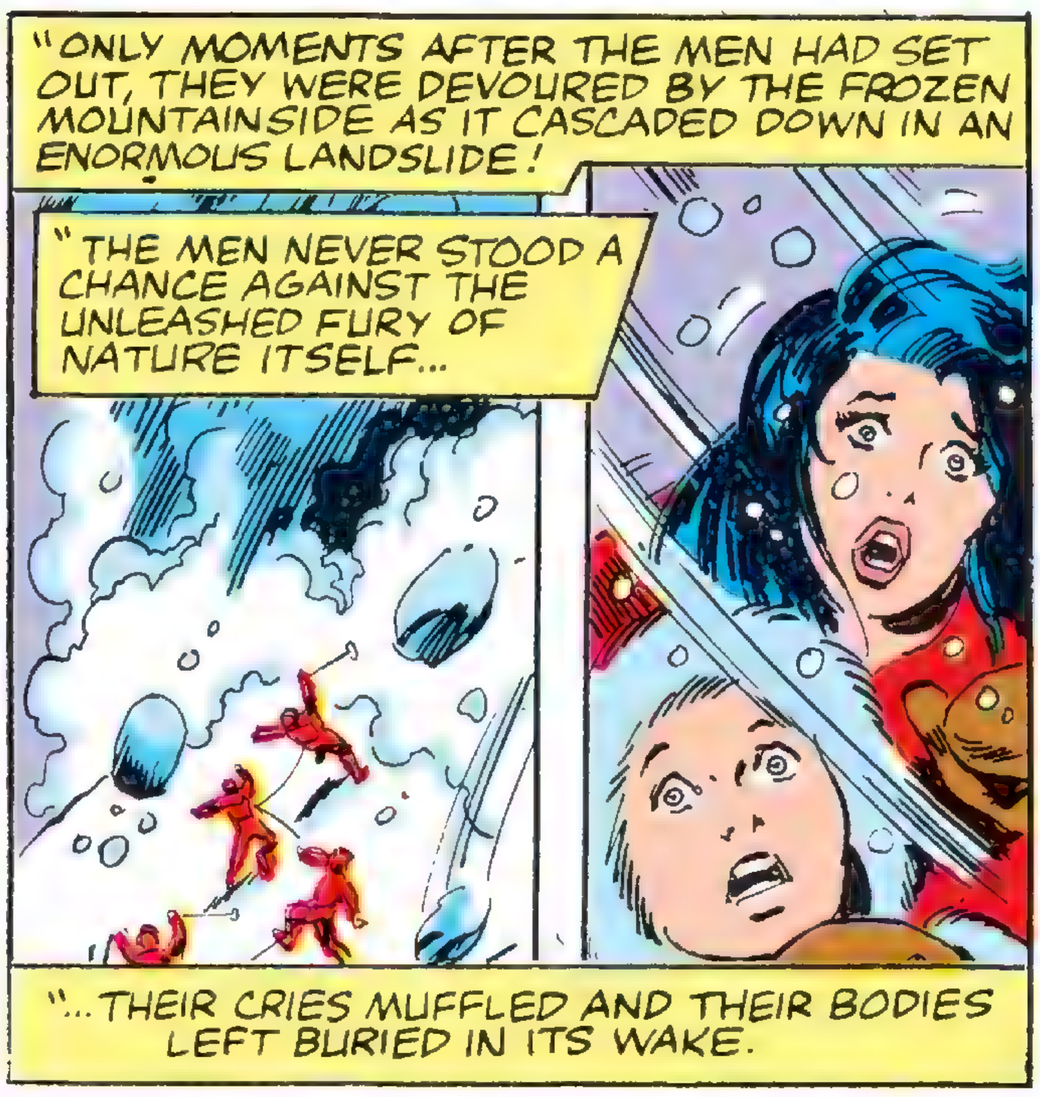
THE ENERGY FOR ALL THE MAGIC WE PERFORM HERE ARE THE SACRED SINGH STONES WHICH REST UPON THE ALTAR. THAT IS THE FOCAL POINT--THAT IS THE CENTER--THE STRENGTH OF THE SHADOW LORDS!

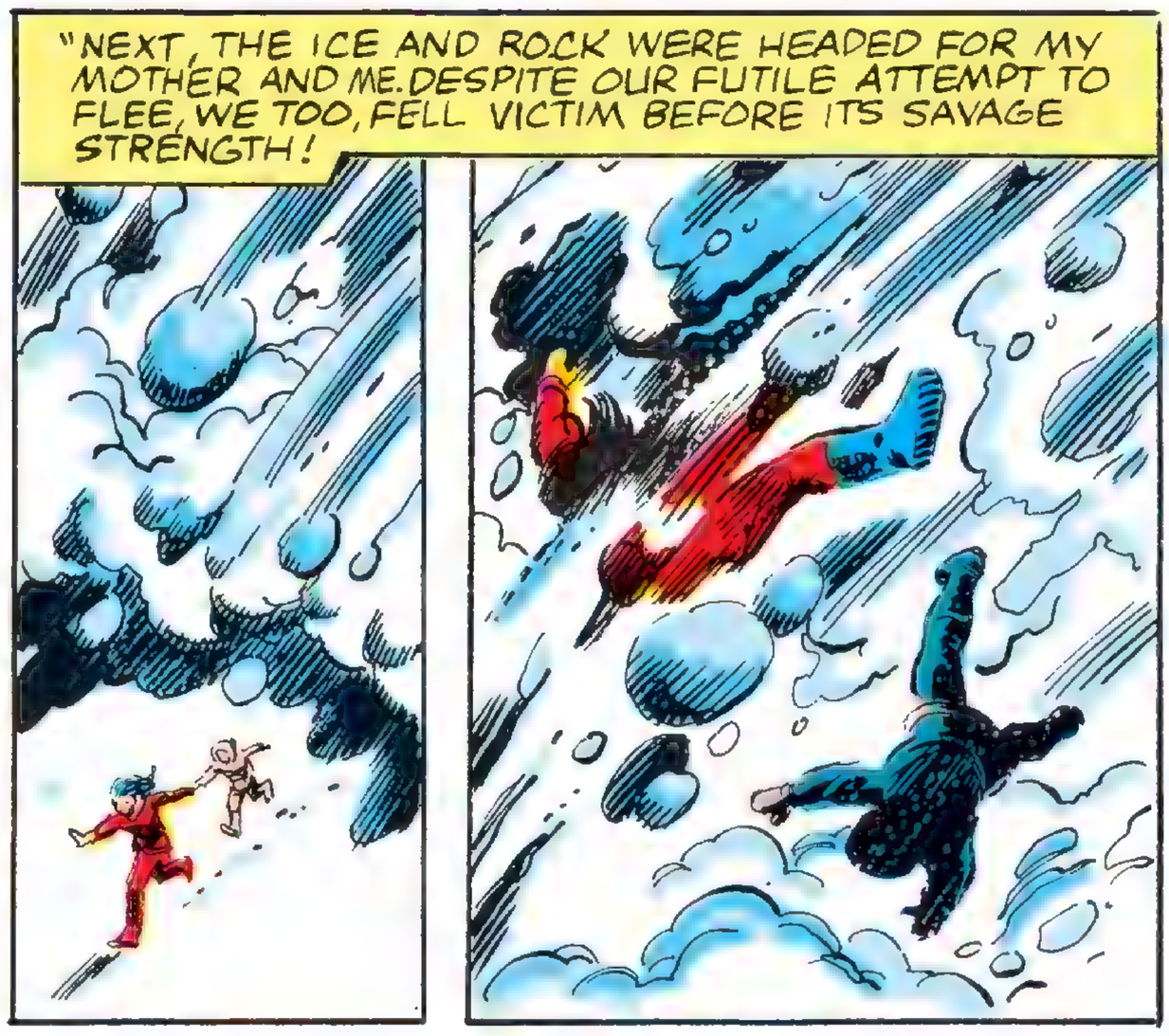
BUT... WHO ARE THE SHADOW LORDS? AND HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR TRAINING IN THE MYSTICAL ARTS?
IT IS TIME I TOLD YOU THE WHOLE STORY. IT WILL BE NECESSARY IF YOU ARE TO TRULY UNDERSTAND...

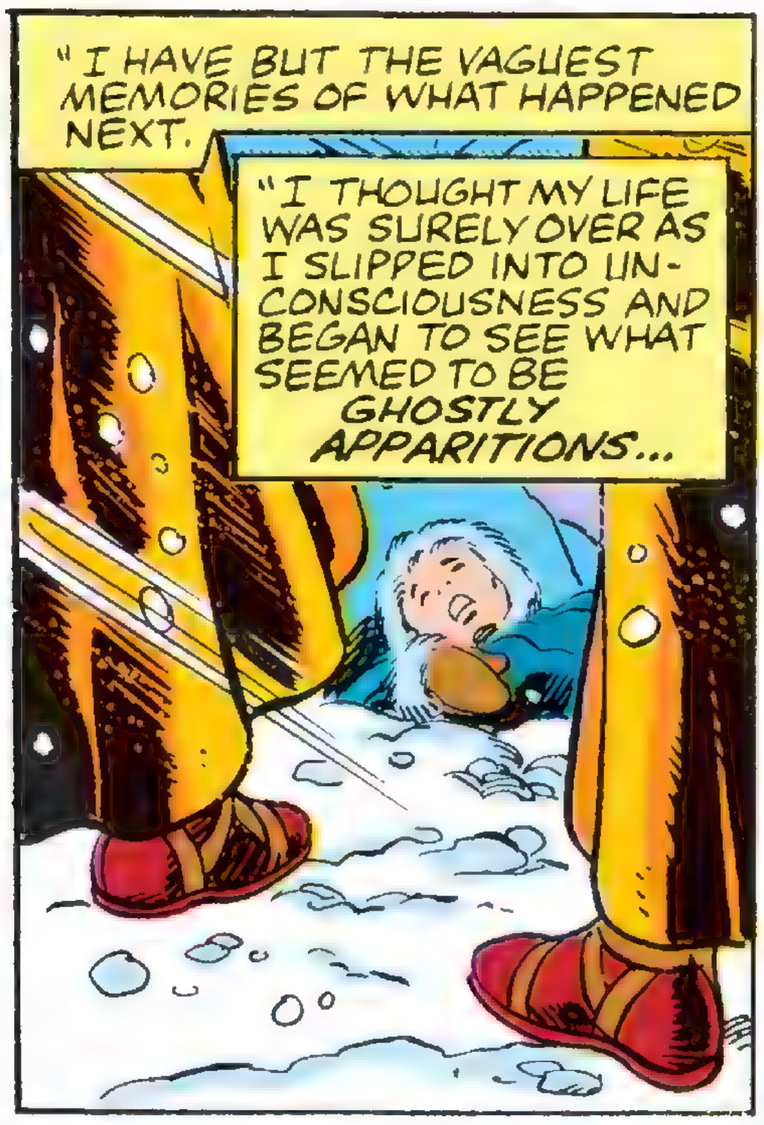

BUT THE MEMORIES ARE SO PAINFUL...

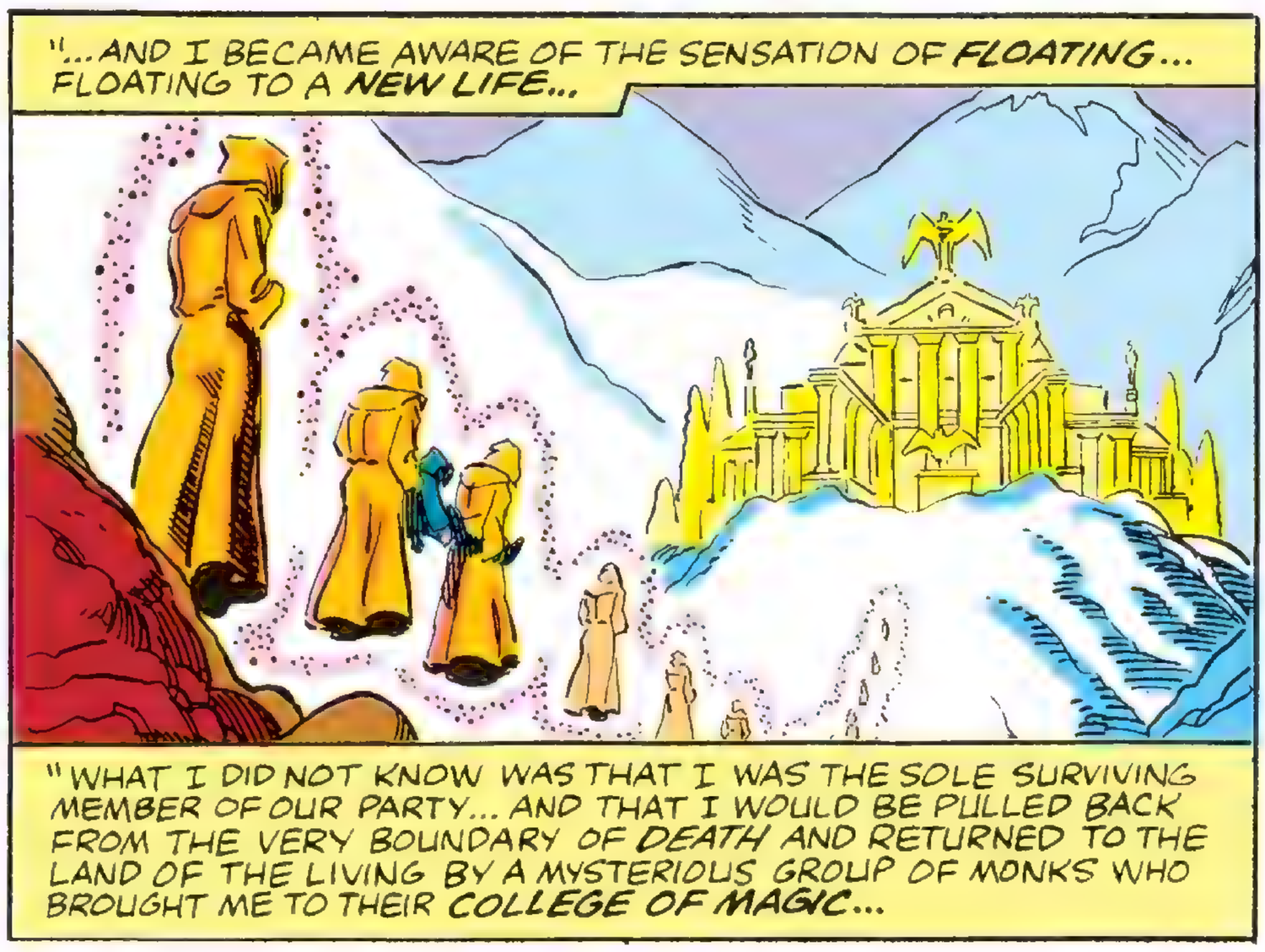
...AND I WOULD NEVER WANT TO FORGET.
I WILL START AT THE BEGINNING-- WITH A JOURNEY UNDERTAKEN WHEN I, MYSELF WAS JUST A BOY.
"MY FATHER HAD LED OUR FAMILY ON AN EXPEDITION TO TIBET

"A CAMP WAS SET UP AND I WAITED BEHIND MY MOTHER AS MY FATHER PROCEEDED AHEAD WITH A GROUP OF MEN TO SURVEY THE TERRAIN WE WERE ABOUT TO TRAVEL"
I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE WHAT'S NEXT, MOTHER!
"IRONICALLY, I HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT THE EXCITEMENT I FELT WOULD SOON GIVE WAY TO MORE SOMBER EMOTIONS...AND MY CHILDHOOD WOULD BE CAST ASIDE FOREVERMORE!

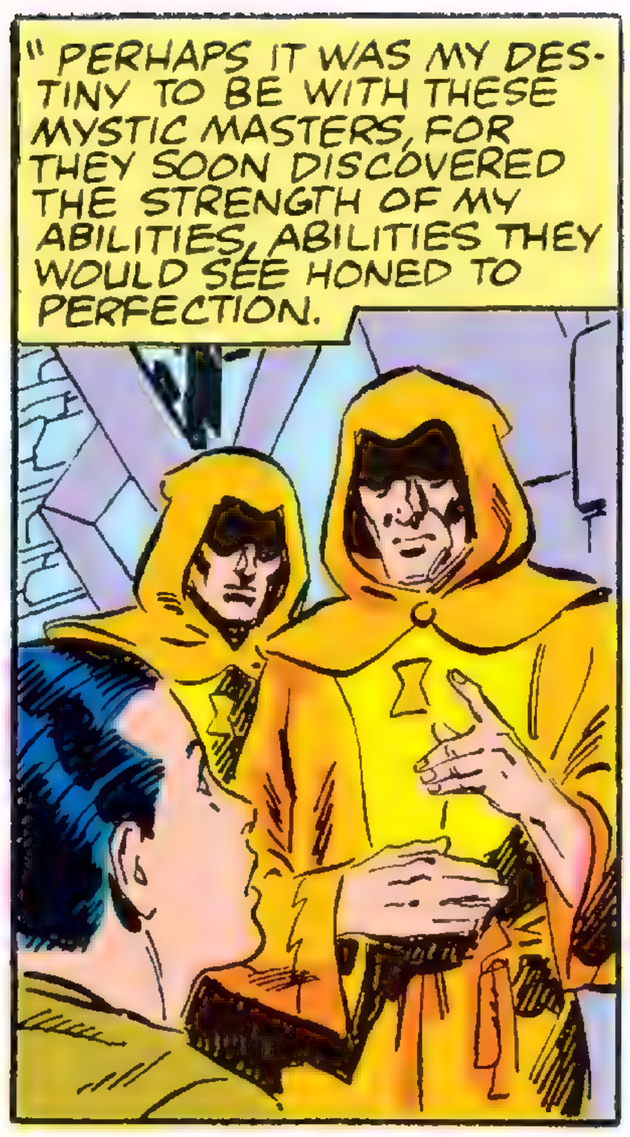

"ONLY MOMENTS AFTER THE MEN HAD SET OUT, THEY WERE DEVOURED BY THE FROZEN MOUNTAINSIDE AS IT CASCADED DOWN IN AN ENORMOUS LANDSLIDE!
"THE MEN NEVER STOOD A CHANCE AGAINST THE UNLEASHED FURY OF NATURE ITSELF...
"...THEIR CRIES MUFFLED AND THEIR BODIES LEFT BURIED IN ITS WAKE.


"NEXT, THE ICE AND ROCK WERE HEADED FOR MY MOTHER AND ME. DESPITE OUR FUTILE ATTEMPT TO FLEE, WE TOO, FELL VICTIM BEFORE ITS SAVAGE STRENGTH!

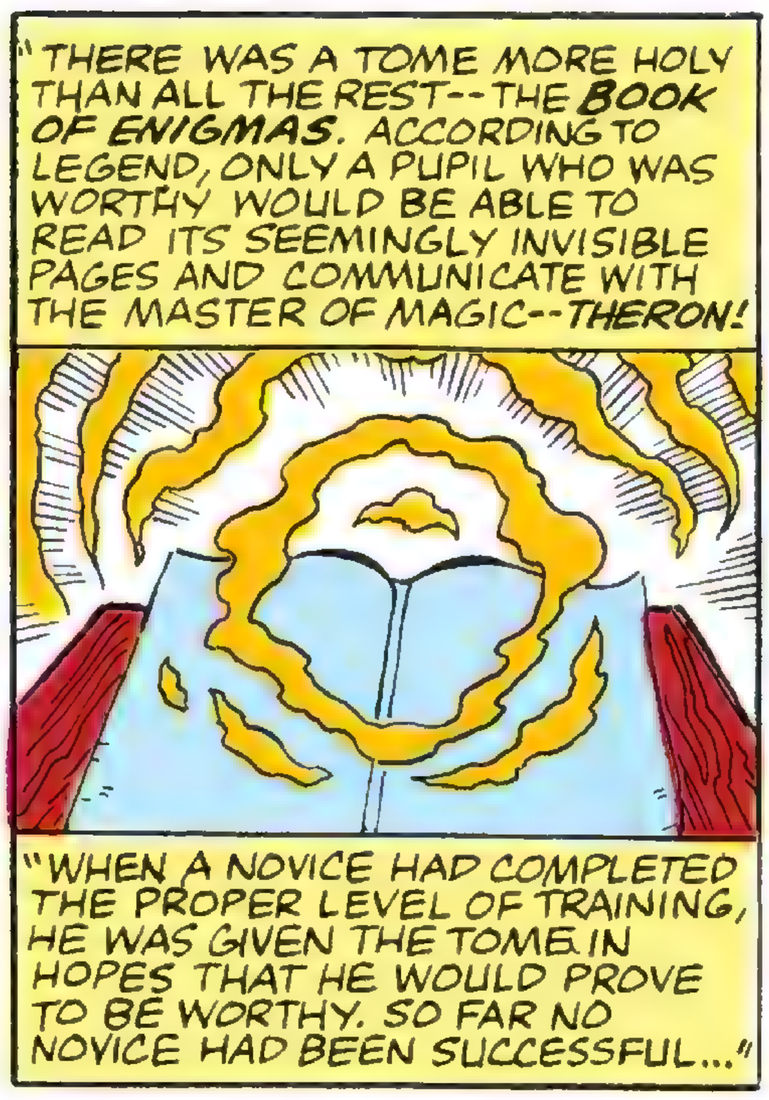

"I HAVE BUT THE VAGUEST MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.
"I THOUGHT MY LIFE WAS SURELY OVER AS I SLIPPED INTO UN-CONSCIOUSNESS AND BEGAN TO SEE WHAT SEEMED TO BE GHOSTLY APPARITIONS...


"...AND I BECAME AWARE OF THE SENSATION OF FLOATING... FLOATING TO A NEW LIFE...
"WHAT I DID NOT KNOW WAS THAT I WAS THE SOLE SURVIVING MEMBER OF OUR PARTY... AND THAT I WOULD BE PULLED BACK FROM THE VERY BOUNDARY OF DEATH AND RETURNED TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING BY A MYSTERIOUS GROUP OF MONKS WHO BROUGHT ME TO THEIR COLLEGE OF MAGIC...

"I LAY UNCONSCIOUS FOR DAYS, BUT GRADUALLY, THROUGH THE USE OF SACRED POTIONS AND ANCIENT REMEDIES, THE MONKS NURSED MY BODY AND SPIRIT BACK TO HEALTH.
"GRATEFULLY, I COULD NOT RECALL THE TRAGIC EVENTS THAT HAD TRANSPIRED. MY MIND WAS A BLUR AND I DID NOT THINK TO QUESTION THIS ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH I FELT QUITE AT HOME.


" PERHAPS IT WAS MY DESTINY TO BE WITH THESE MYSTIC MASTERS, FOR THEY SOON DISCOVERED THE STRENGTH OF MY ABILITIES, ABILITIES THEY WOULD SEE HONED TO PERFECTION.

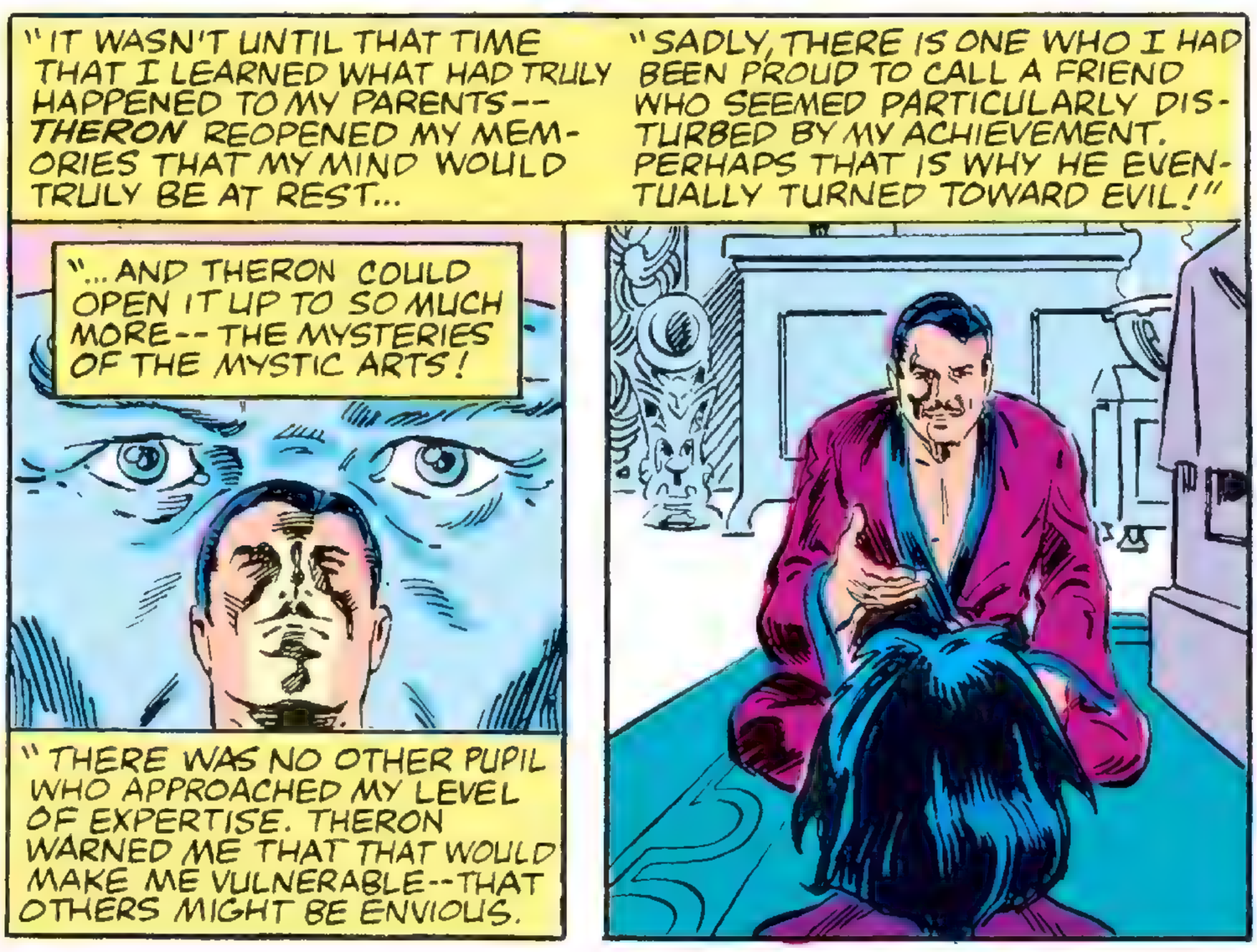
" MONTHS OF STUDY TURNED TO YEARS, AS I PORED OVER ANCIENT TOMES AND UNCOVERED THE SECRETS OF THEIR MYSTERIOUS POTIONS. BUT STILL MY TRAINING WAS INCOMPLETE

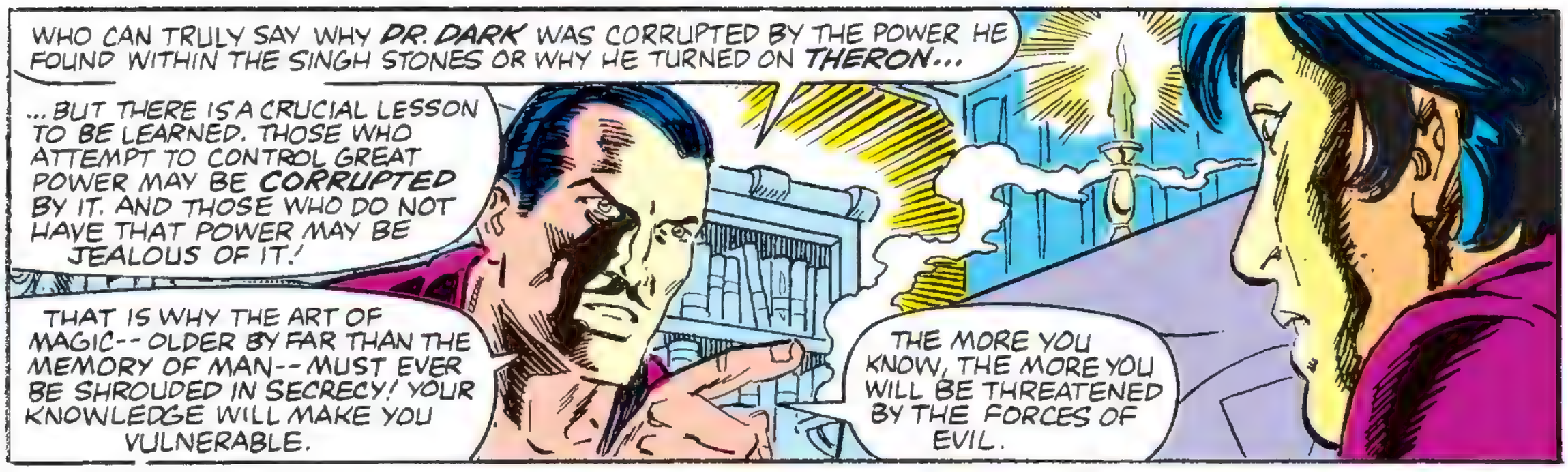

" THERE WAS A TOME MORE HOLY THAN ALL THE REST--THE BOOK OF ENIGMAS. ACCORDING TO LEGEND, ONLY A PUPIL WHO WAS WORTHY WOULD BE ABLE TO READ ITS SEEMINGLY INVISIBLE PAGES AND COMMUNICATE WITH THE MASTER OF MAGIC--THERON!
"WHEN A NOVICE HAD COMPLETED THE PROPER LEVEL OF TRAINING, HE WAS GIVEN THE TOME IN HOPES THAT HE WOULD PROVE TO BE WORTHY. SO FAR NO NOVICE HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL..."

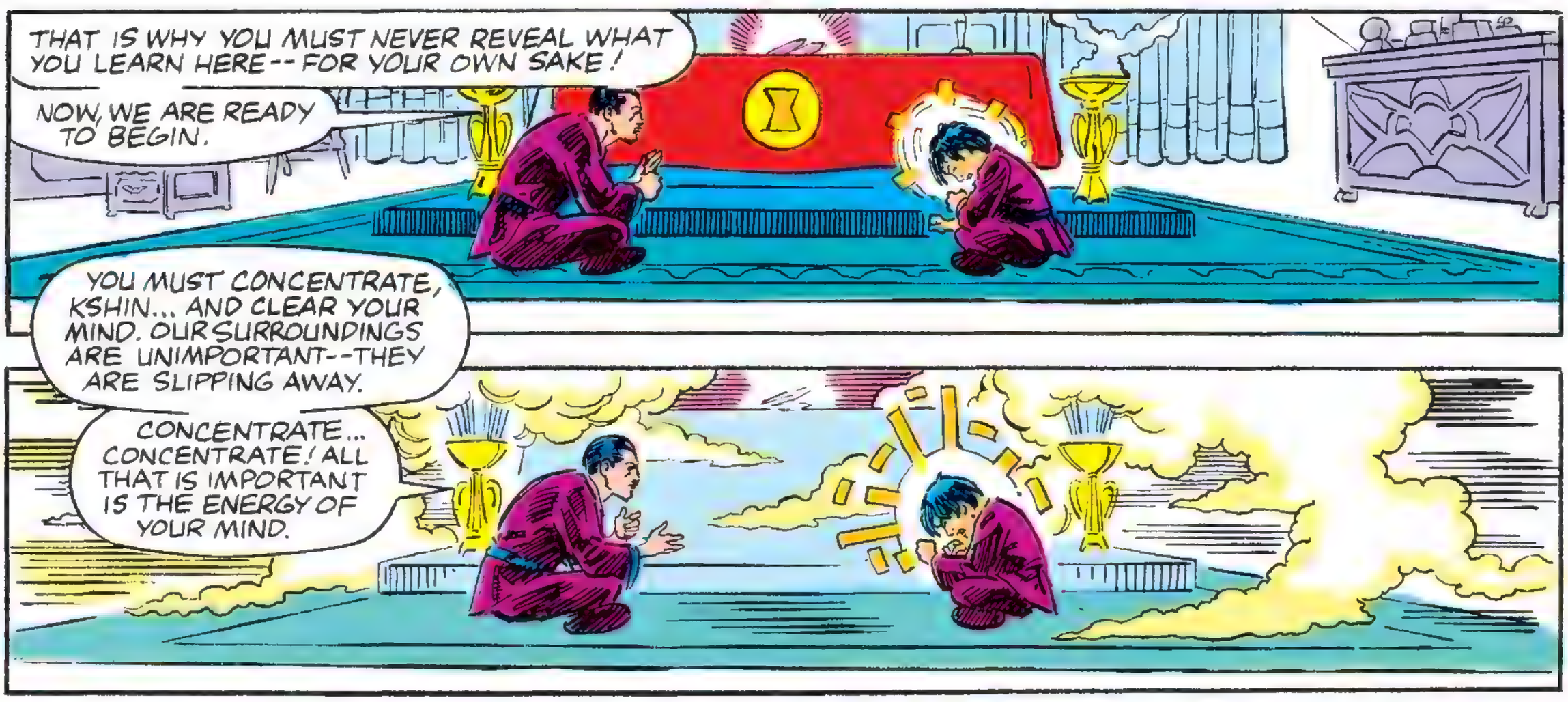
"BUT..."
YES, YES, I SEE THIS CLEARLY
BAH! THE OUTSIDER LIES! WHAT IS HIS PROOF?

IF IT IS PROOF YOU NEED...
EH, WHAT'S THIS?

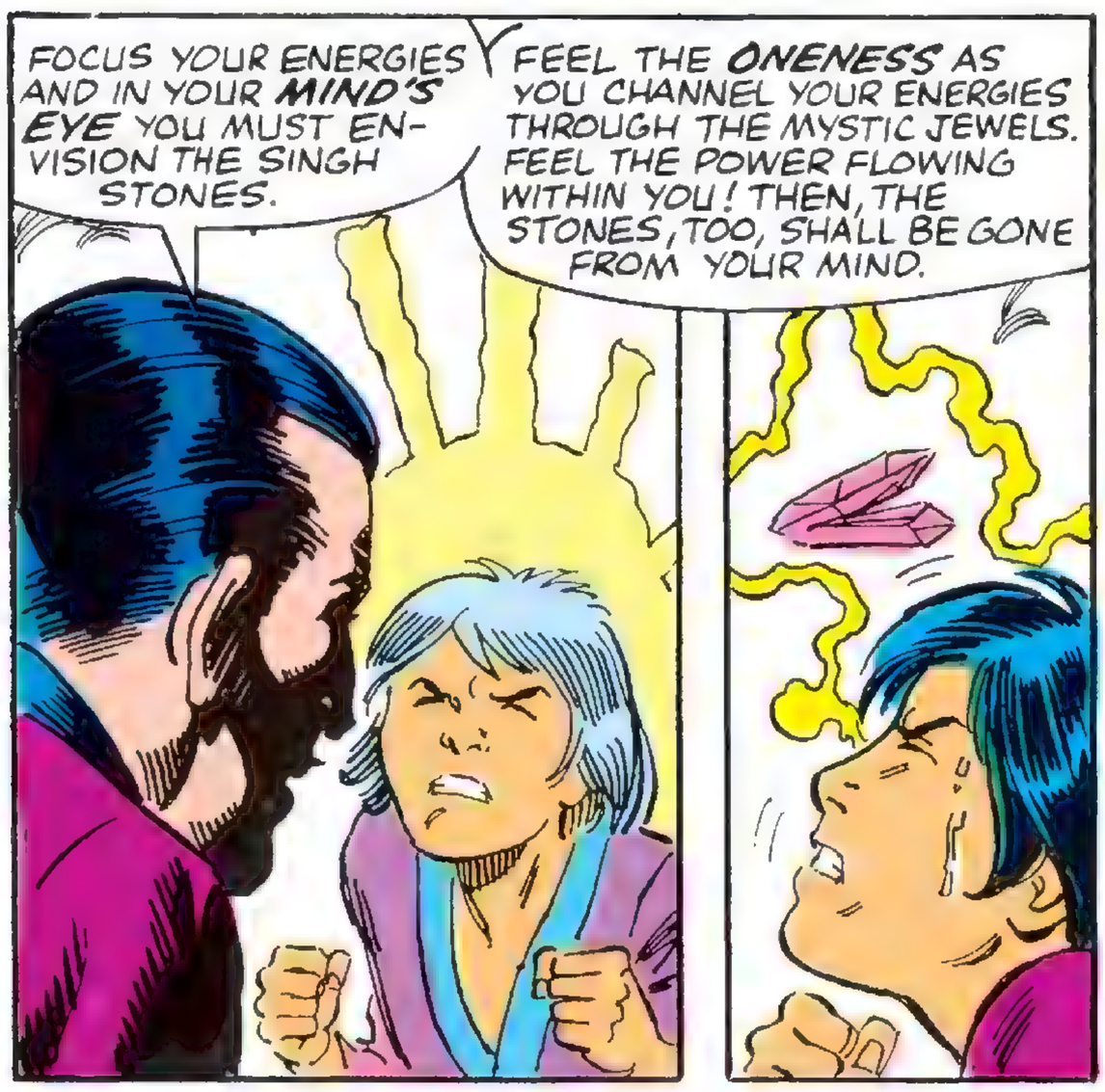
I AM YOUR PROOF--THERON HIMSELF DECLARES THAT THIS NOVICE SHALL BE HIS CHOSEN PUPIL!

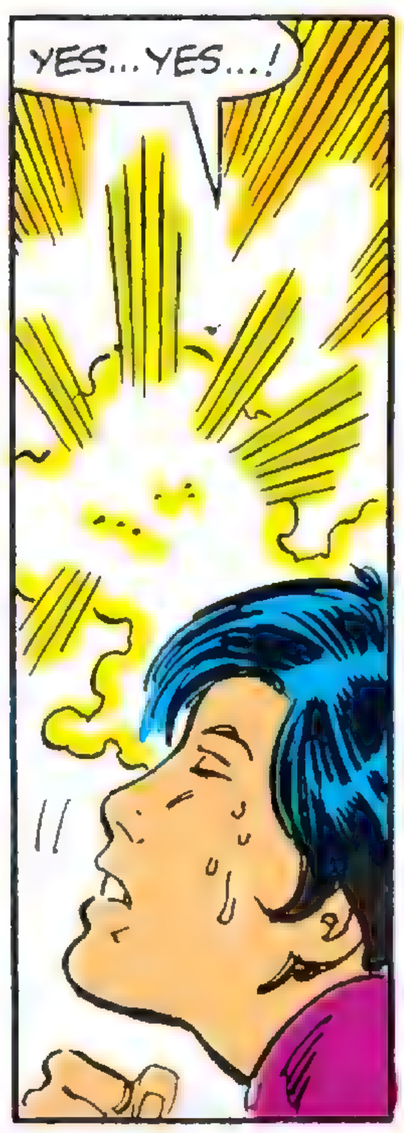

"IT WASN'T UNTIL THAT TIME THAT I LEARNED WHAT HAD TRULY HAPPENED TO MY PARENTS--THERON REOPENED MY MEMORIES THAT MY MIND WOULD TRULY BE AT REST...
"SADLY, THERE IS ONE WHO I HAD BEEN PROUD TO CALL A FRIEND WHO SEEMED PARTICULARLY DISTURBED BY MY ACHIEVEMENT. PERHAPS THAT IS WHY HE EVENTUALLY TURNED TOWARD EVIL!"
"... AND THERON COULD OPEN IT UP TO SO MUCH MORE--THE MYSTERIES OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!
"THERE WAS NO OTHER PUPIL WHO APPROACHED MY LEVEL OF EXPERTISE. THERON WARNED ME THAT THAT WOULD MAKE ME VULNERABLE--THAT OTHERS MIGHT BE ENVIOUS.


WHO CAN TRULY SAY WHY DR. DARK WAS CORRUPTED BY THE POWER HE FOUND WITHIN THE SINGH STONES OR WHY HE TURNED ON THERON...
...BUT THERE IS A CRUCIAL LESSON TO BE LEARNED. THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO CONTROL GREAT POWER MAY BE CORRUPTED BY IT. AND THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE THAT POWER MAY BE JEALOUS OF IT!
THAT IS WHY THE ART OF MAGIC--OLDER BY FAR THAN THE MEMORY OF MAN--MUST EVER BE SHROUDED IN SECRECY! YOUR KNOWLEDGE WILL MAKE YOU VULNERABLE.
THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE YOU WILL BE THREATENED BY THE FORCES OF EVIL.

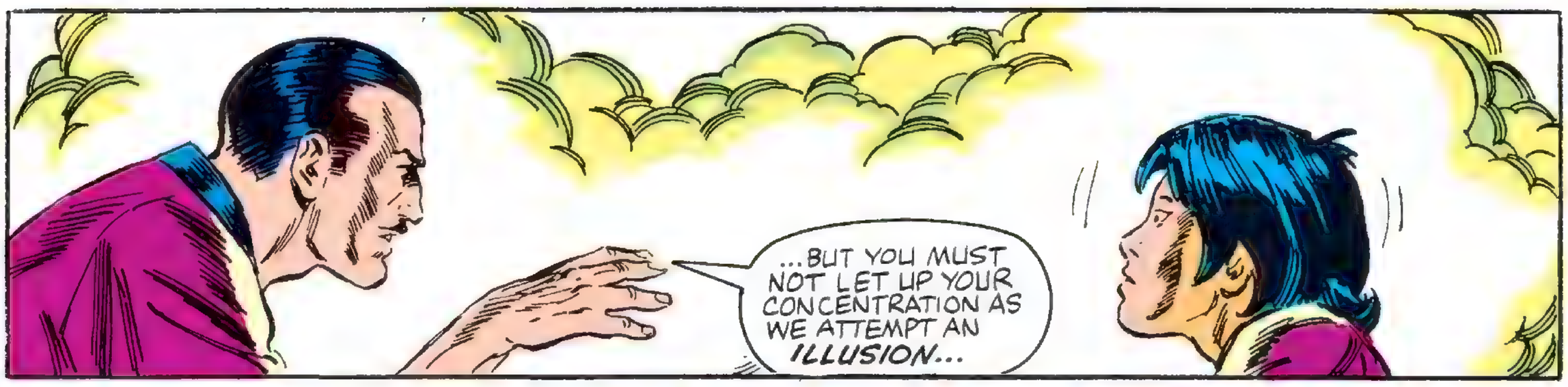

THAT IS WHY YOU MUST NEVER REVEAL WHAT YOU LEARN HERE--FOR YOUR OWN SAKE!
NOW, WE ARE READY TO BEGIN.
YOU MUST CONCENTRATE, KSHIN... AND CLEAR YOUR MIND. OUR SURROUNDINGS ARE UNIMPORTANT--THEY ARE SLIPPING AWAY.
CONCENTRATE... CONCENTRATE! ALL THAT IS IMPORTANT IS THE ENERGY OF YOUR MIND.

NOW FEEL YOURSELF FLOATING--NO LONGER CONFINED BY WALLS THAT SEEMED TO SURROUND YOU.
YOU ARE RELEASED!

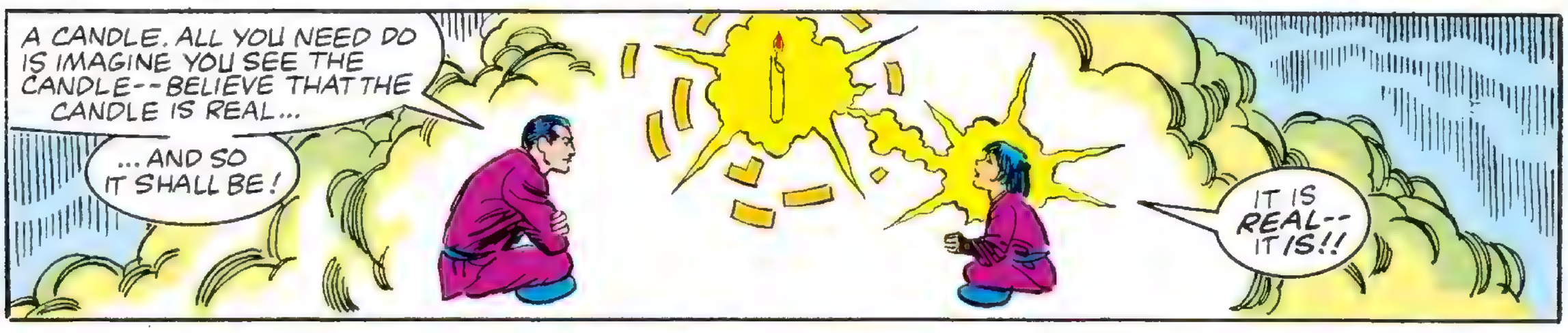

FOCUS YOUR ENERGIES AND IN YOUR MIND'S EYE YOU MUST EN-VISION THE SINGH STONES.
FEEL THE ONENESS AS YOU CHANNEL YOUR ENERGIES THROUGH THE MYSTIC JEWELS. FEEL THE POWER FLOWING WITHIN YOU! THEN, THE STONES, TOO, SHALL BE GONE FROM YOUR MIND.

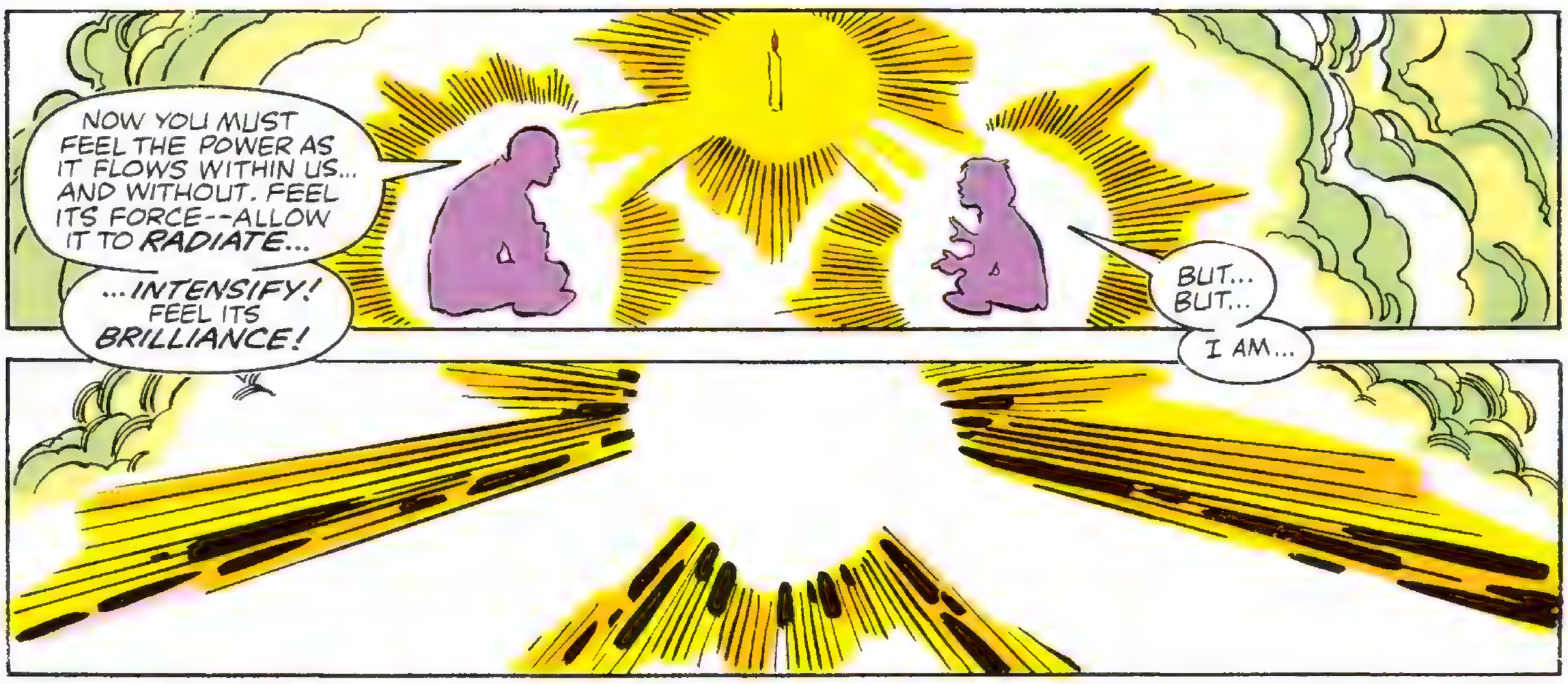

YES...YES...!

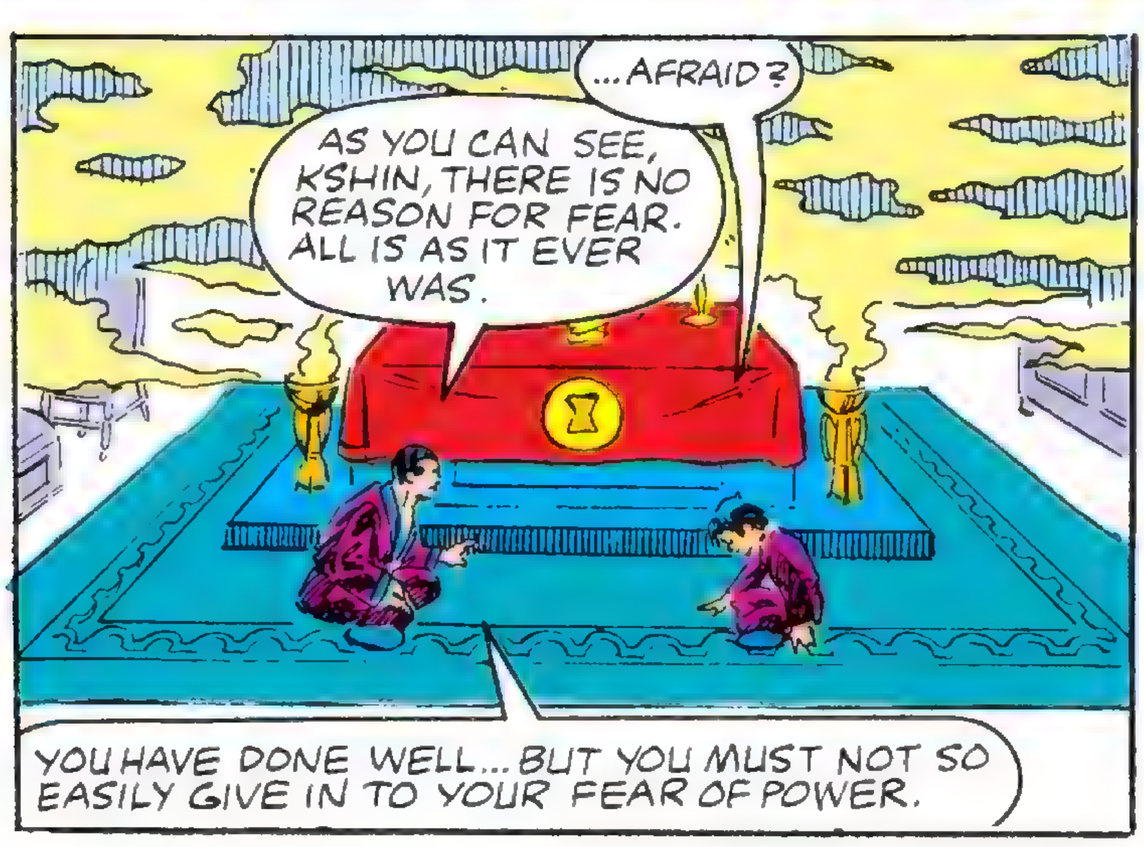
GOOD...


...BUT YOU MUST NOT LET UP YOUR CONCENTRATION AS WE ATTEMPT AN ILLUSION...

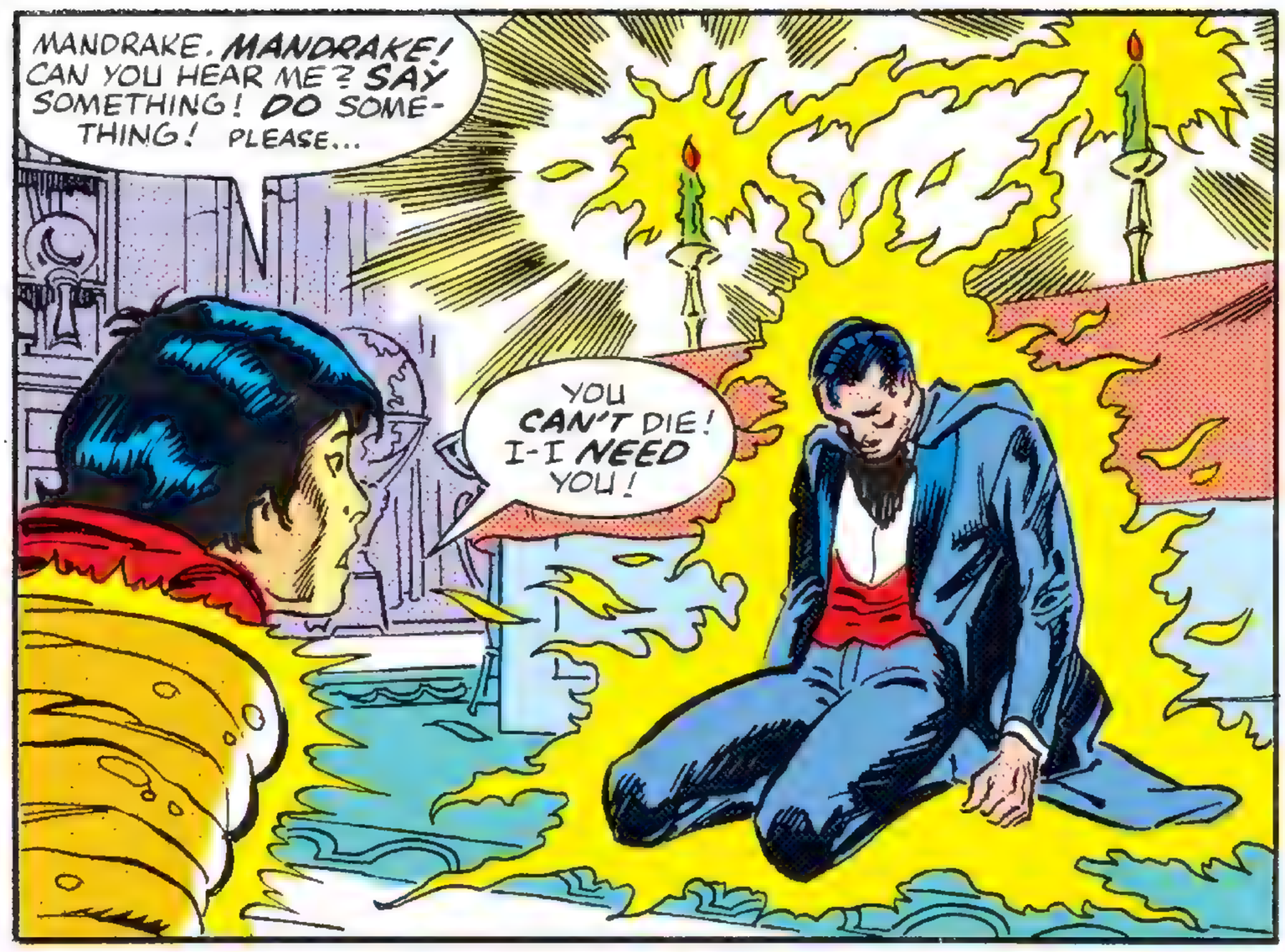
YOU MUST TURN YOUR MIND'S EYE INWARD... ATTEMPT TO FIND THE CENTER SO THAT YOU MAY DRAW UPON ITS STRENGTH. NOW YOU SEE SOMETHING GLOWING IN THE CENTER.

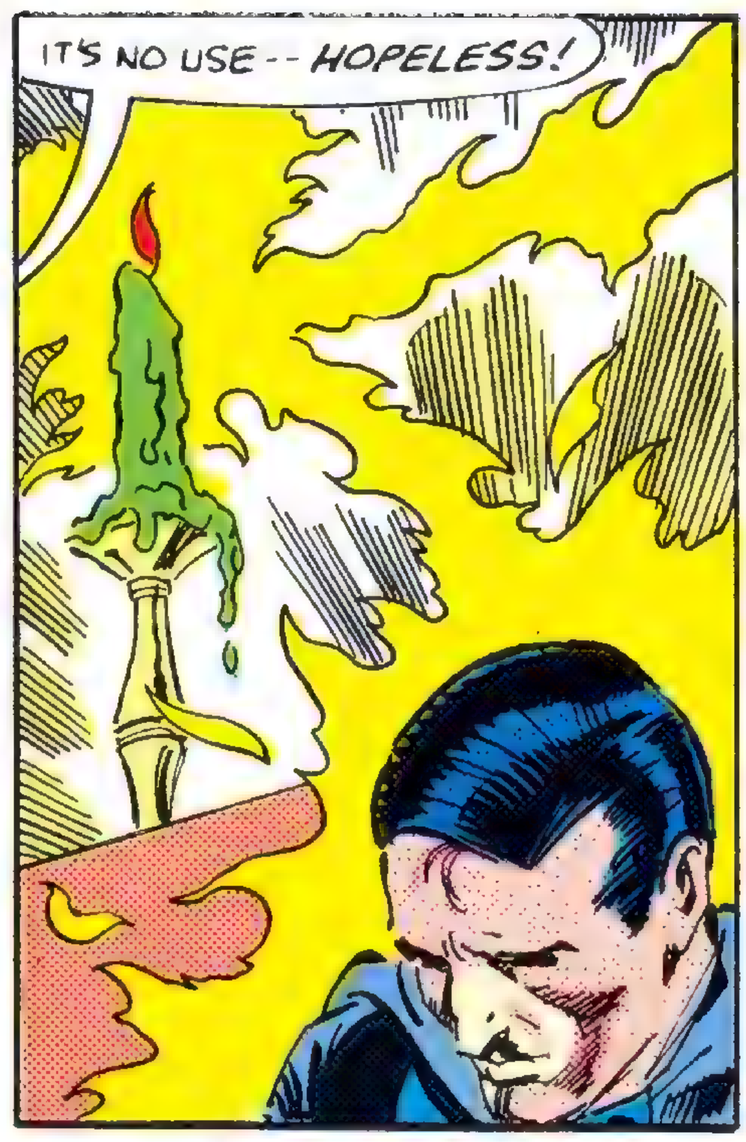

A CANDLE. ALL YOU NEED DO IS IMAGINE YOU SEE THE CANDLE--BELIEVE THAT THE CANDLE IS REAL...
...AND SO IT SHALL BE!
IT IS REAL--IT IS!!


NOW YOU MUST FEEL THE POWER AS IT FLOWS WITHIN US... AND WITHOUT. FEEL ITS FORCE--ALLOW IT TO RADIATE...
...INTENSIFY! FEEL ITS BRILLIANCE!
BUT... BUT...
I AM...

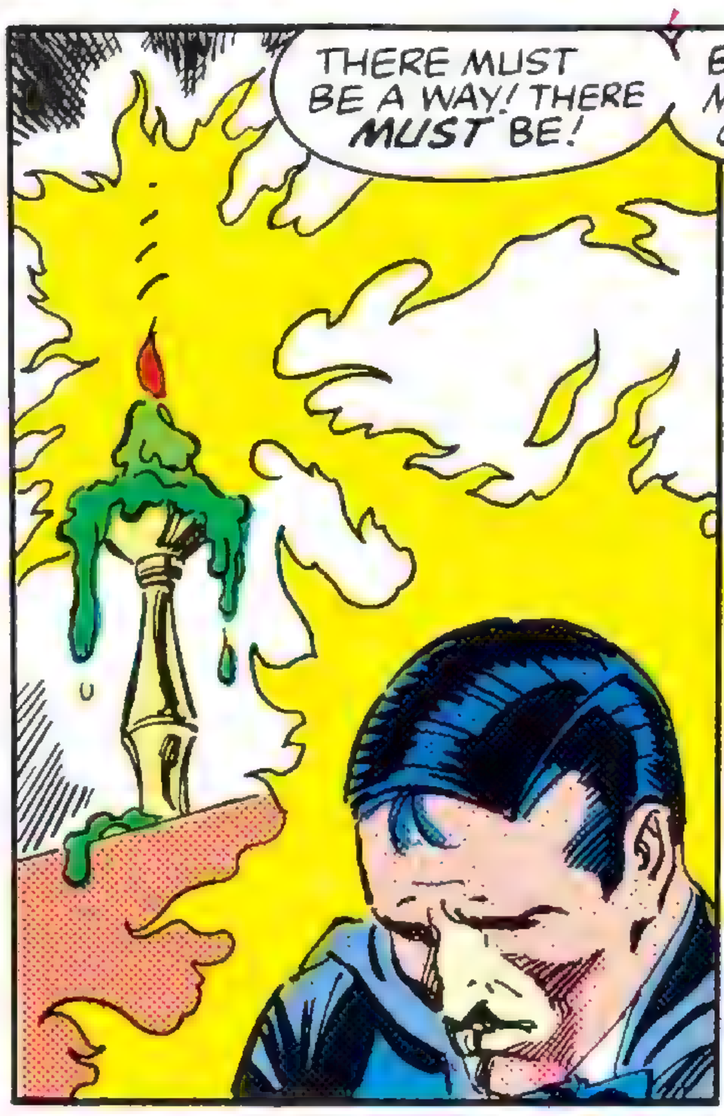

...AFRAID?
AS YOU CAN SEE, KSHIN, THERE IS NO REASON FOR FEAR. ALL IS AS IT EVER WAS.
YOU HAVE DONE WELL... BUT YOU MUST NOT SO EASILY GIVE IN TO YOUR FEAR OF POWER.

THE FORCES OF EVIL DO NOT SHARE THAT FEAR! THAT IS WHY WE MUST MASTER OUR ABILITIES. THAT IS WHY I WILL PASS MY KNOWLEDGE ON TO YOU, SON. WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR ANY EVENTUALITY!
WE NEVER KNOW WHEN EVIL MAY STRIKE AGAIN!

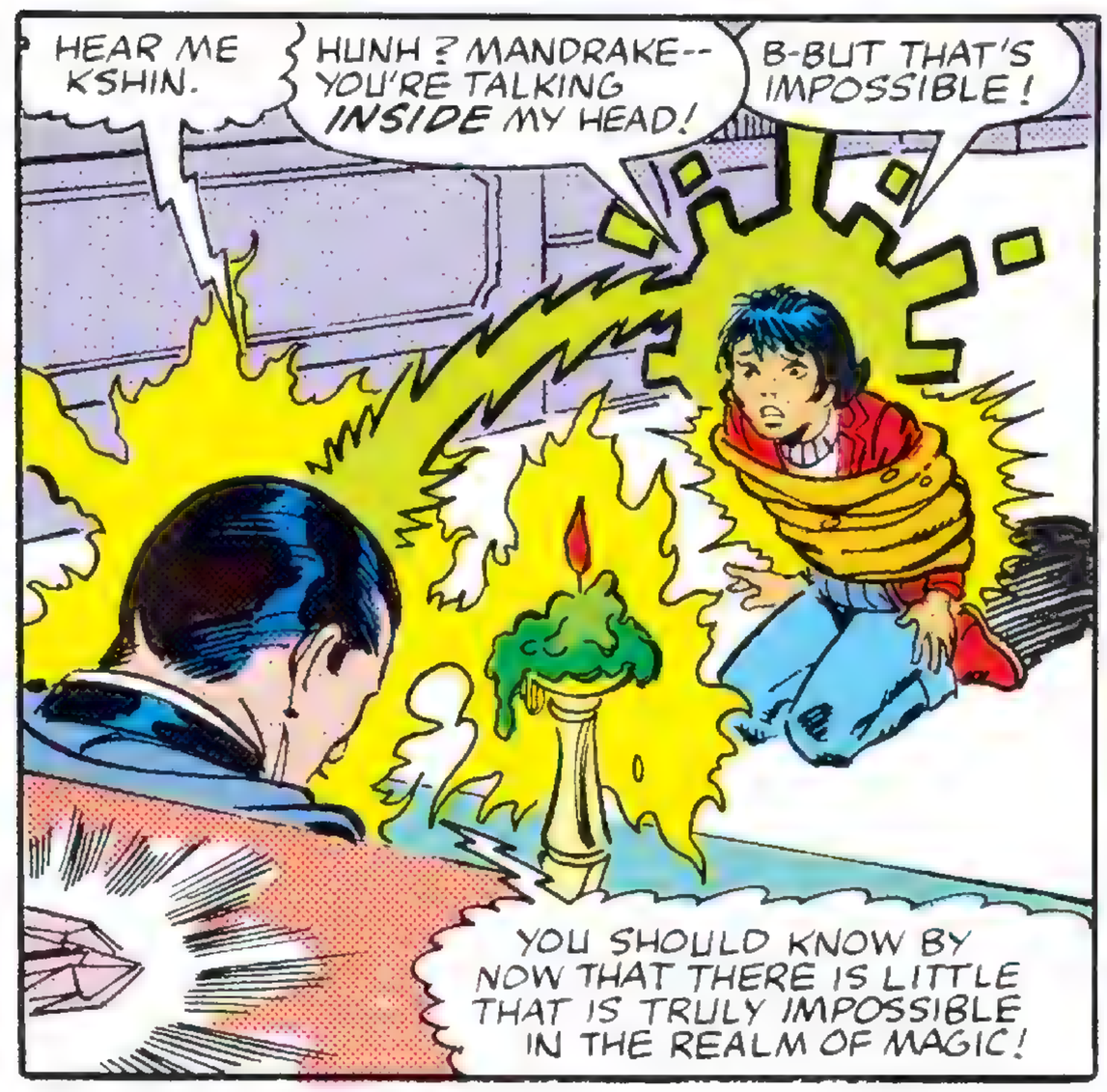

MANDRAKE. MANDRAKE! CAN YOU HEAR ME? SAY SOMETHING! DO SOMETHING! PLEASE...
YOU CAN'T DIE! I-I NEED YOU!


IT'S NO USE -- HOPELESS!

NO! DON'T EVEN THINK THAT!


THERE MUST BE A WAY! THERE MUST BE!

BUT THE CANDLES HAVE ALMOST MELTED AWAY! TIME IS RUNNING OUT! IF ONLY I WEREN'T SO...


HEAR ME KSHIN.
HUNH? MANDRAKE-- YOU'RE TALKING INSIDE MY HEAD!
B-BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
YOU SHOULD KNOW BY NOW THAT THERE IS LITTLE THAT IS TRULY IMPOSSIBLE IN THE REALM OF MAGIC!

YOU MUST LISTEN CLOSELY AND BE BRAVE, MY SON-- MY VERY LIFE HANGS IN THE BALANCE!
I WON'T LET YOU DOWN.

ELSEWHERE, IN A **MAGICAL DIMENSION** FAR BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF MORTAL COMPREHENSION...

I HAVE WASTED FAR TOO MUCH TIME IN THIS UNSPEAKABLE NETHER-REALITY, BUT ALL MY ATTEMPTS TO BE FREE OF THIS DREADED DOMAIN HAVE PROVEN UNSUCCESSFUL. THE INTERDIMENSIONAL PORTAL MUST BE OPENED-- I MUST SEEK MY **VENGEANCE** ON THE MISBEGOTTEN MANDRAKE!

MANDRAKE--HE IS THE ONE WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MY EXILE IN THIS HIDEOUS WORLD! I WILL NOT REST UNTIL HE HAS BEEN MADE TO PAY!

MASTER, WE DETECT A STRANGE **ELECTRO-STORM** HEADING THIS WAY.

WE SEEK YOUR GUIDANCE. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

**BAH!** CAN'T YOU SEE THAT **DR. DARK** HAS MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS TO CONTEMPLATE THAN YOUR WELL-BEING? DO WHATEVER YOU WANT. IT IS OF NO CONCERN TO ME! JUST...

**BEGONE!!**

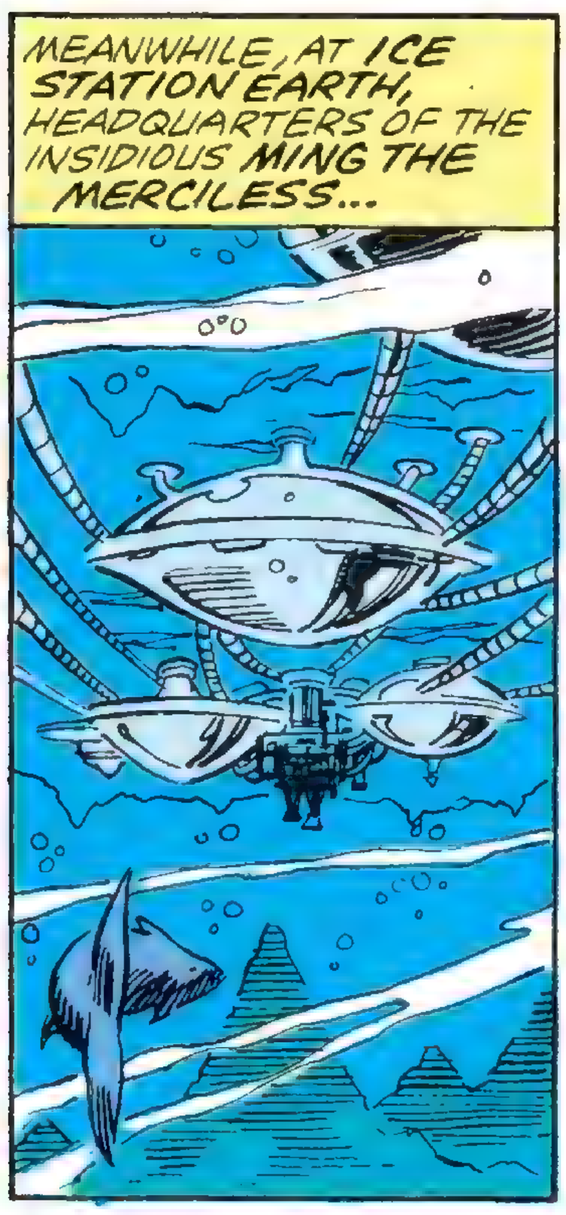
THE CRETINOUS FOOLS DO NOT SUSPECT THAT THE STORM HAS BEEN CALLED HERE BY MY OWN INCANTATIONS. IT SHALL PROVIDE THE POTENTIAL TO BREACH THE CHASMS THAT SEPARATE ME FROM THE EARTH!

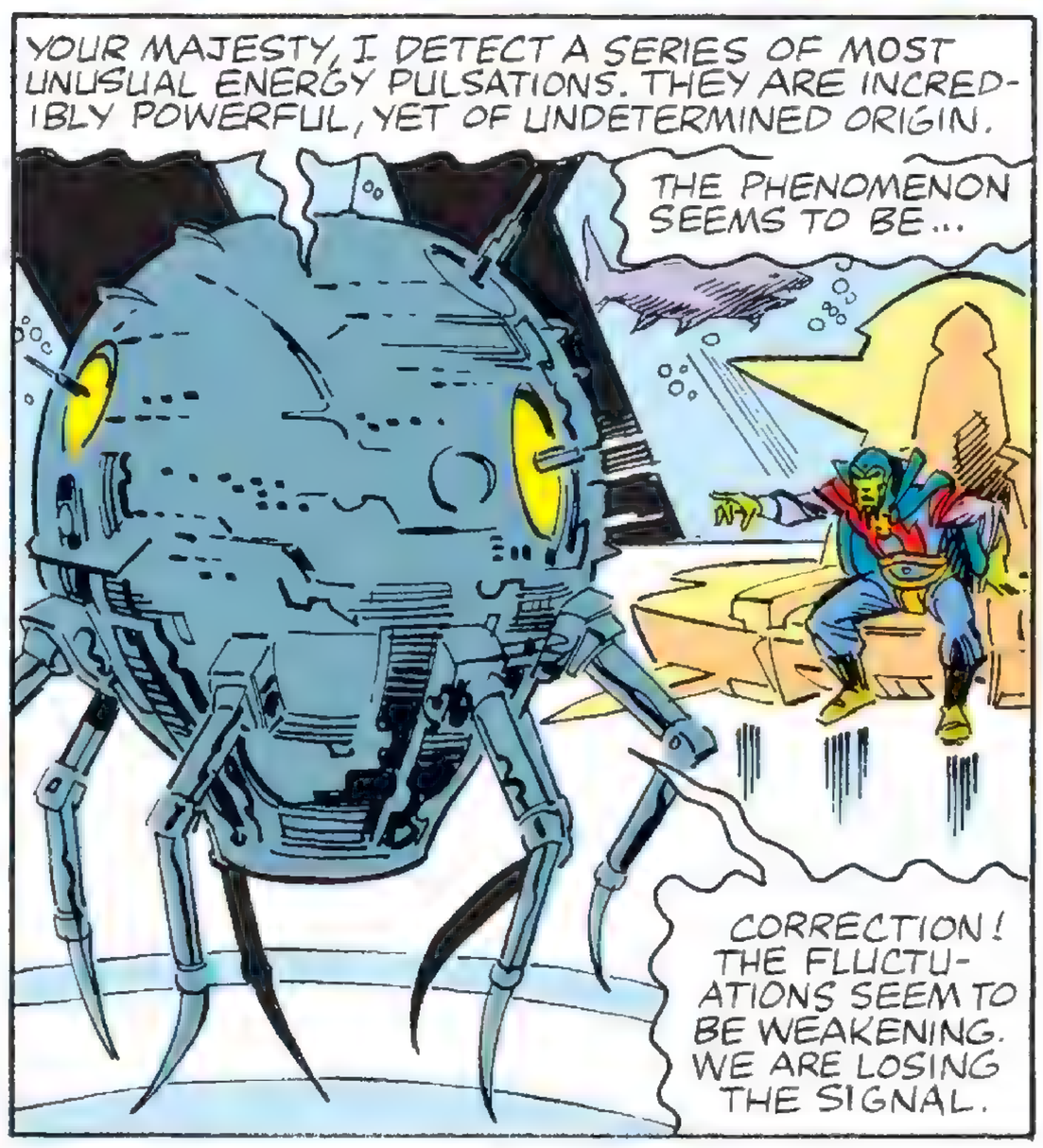
THIS TIME **I SHALL SUCCEED!**

I SHALL DRAIN POWER FROM THE ELECTRO-STORM AND FUNNEL IT INTO THE INTER DIMENSIONAL GATEWAY.

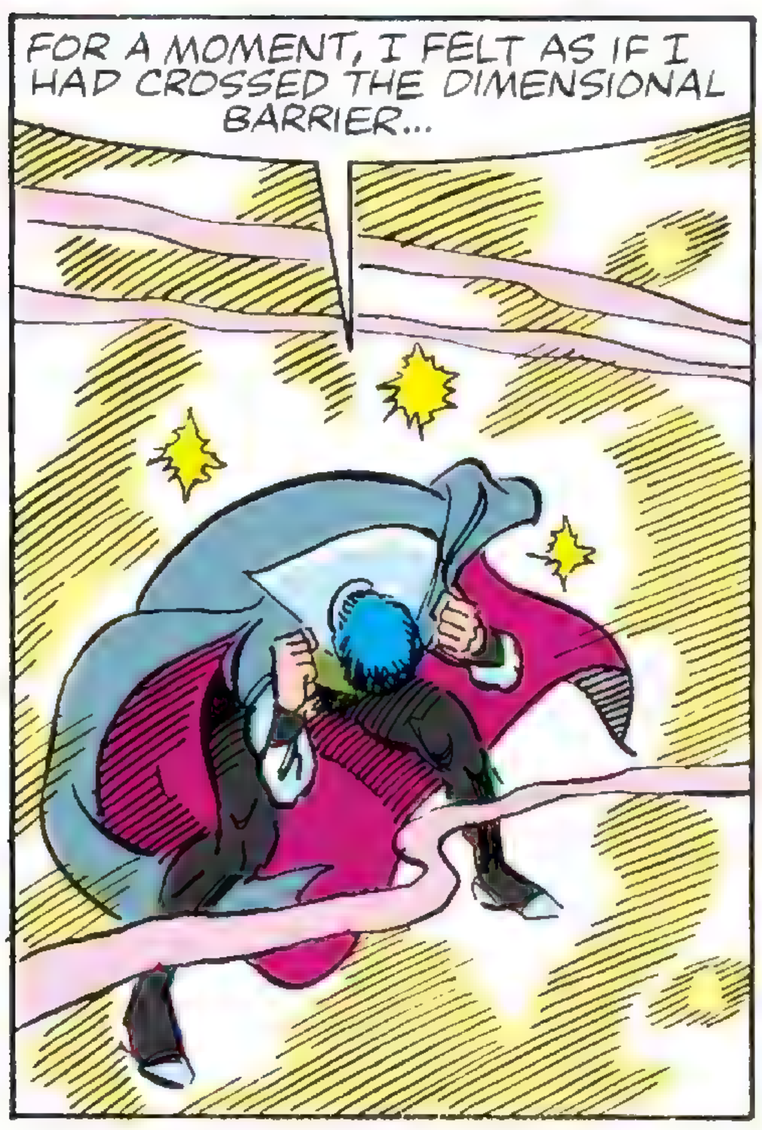
YES... YES! I FEEL ITS STRENGTH! NOTHING WILL STOP ME THIS TIME-- NOTHING!!

MANDRAKE-- YOU ARE MINE!!


MEANWHILE, AT ICE STATION EARTH, HEADQUARTERS OF THE INSIDIOUS MING THE MERCILESS...


YOUR MAJESTY, I DETECT A SERIES OF MOST UNUSUAL ENERGY PULSATIONS. THEY ARE INCREDIBLY POWERFUL, YET OF UNDETERMINED ORIGIN.
THE PHENOMENON SEEMS TO BE...
CORRECTION! THE FLUCTUATIONS SEEM TO BE WEAKENING. WE ARE LOSING THE SIGNAL.

YOU WOULD DO WELL TO HOLD ON TO IT, OCTON! I'M WARNING YOU. I MUST KNOW THE SOURCE OF ITS GREAT POWER. LOCK ONTO IT-- AND BRING IT TO ME!


FOR A MOMENT, I FELT AS IF I HAD CROSSED THE DIMENSIONAL BARRIER...

... BUT, SUDDENLY I WAS BACK... MY SPELL WEAKENED.

EH? AN ENORMOUS SURGE OF ENERGY, WHAT-- WHAT...?

AND, IN AN INSTANT, DR. DARK IS GONE...

YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED, OCTON... BUT LITTLE DID I SUSPECT THE SOURCE OF THIS PECULIAR ENERGY SURGE. SO WE MEET AGAIN, MY DEAR DR. DARK.
I HAD NO IDEA DARK CONTROLLED SUCH ENERGIES. HIS POWER MUST BE MINE!
YOU MUST TELL ME ALL THAT HAS TRANSPIRED SINCE WE LAST MET.

AS IF YOU COULD CARE LESS!
YOU HURT ME, DEAR DOCTOR.

I AM MOST CONCERNED ABOUT ALL THAT AFFECTS MY TRUSTED COMRADES

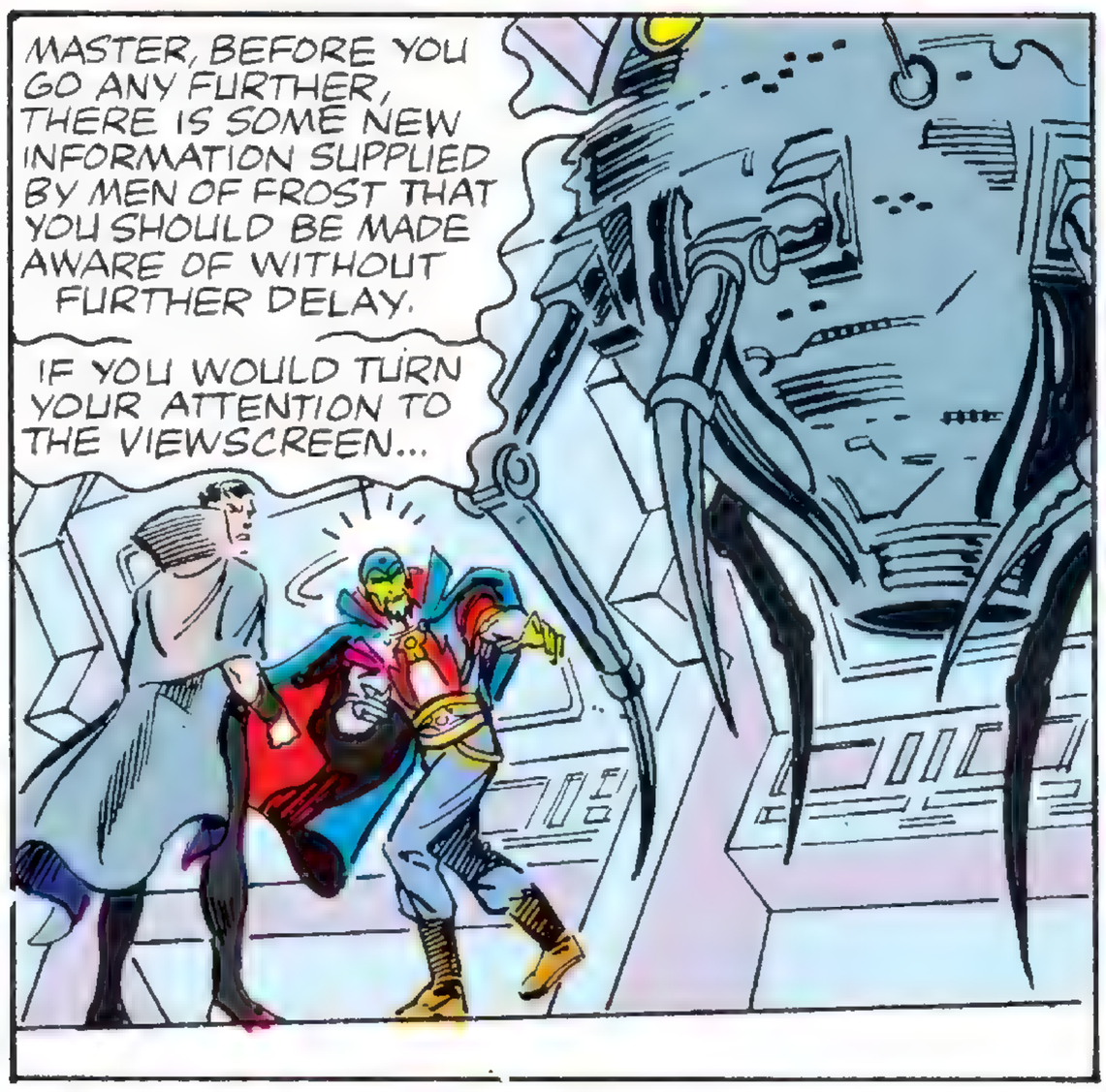
OH, DO SPARE ME THE HISTRIONICS, MING. NONE OF THAT MATTERS NOW, ANYWAY. ALL I WANT IS TO SEE THAT MANDRAKE IS DEAD!
HEH-HEH. THEN YOU SHOULD BE GLAD TO LEARN THAT HE ALREADY IS QUITE DEAD! HE...EXPIRED... ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE ACCURSED DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH! YOU HAVE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED TO TURN YOUR ATTENTIONS ELSE-WHERE.
CONFIDENT AS ALWAYS, MING, BUT WRONG!

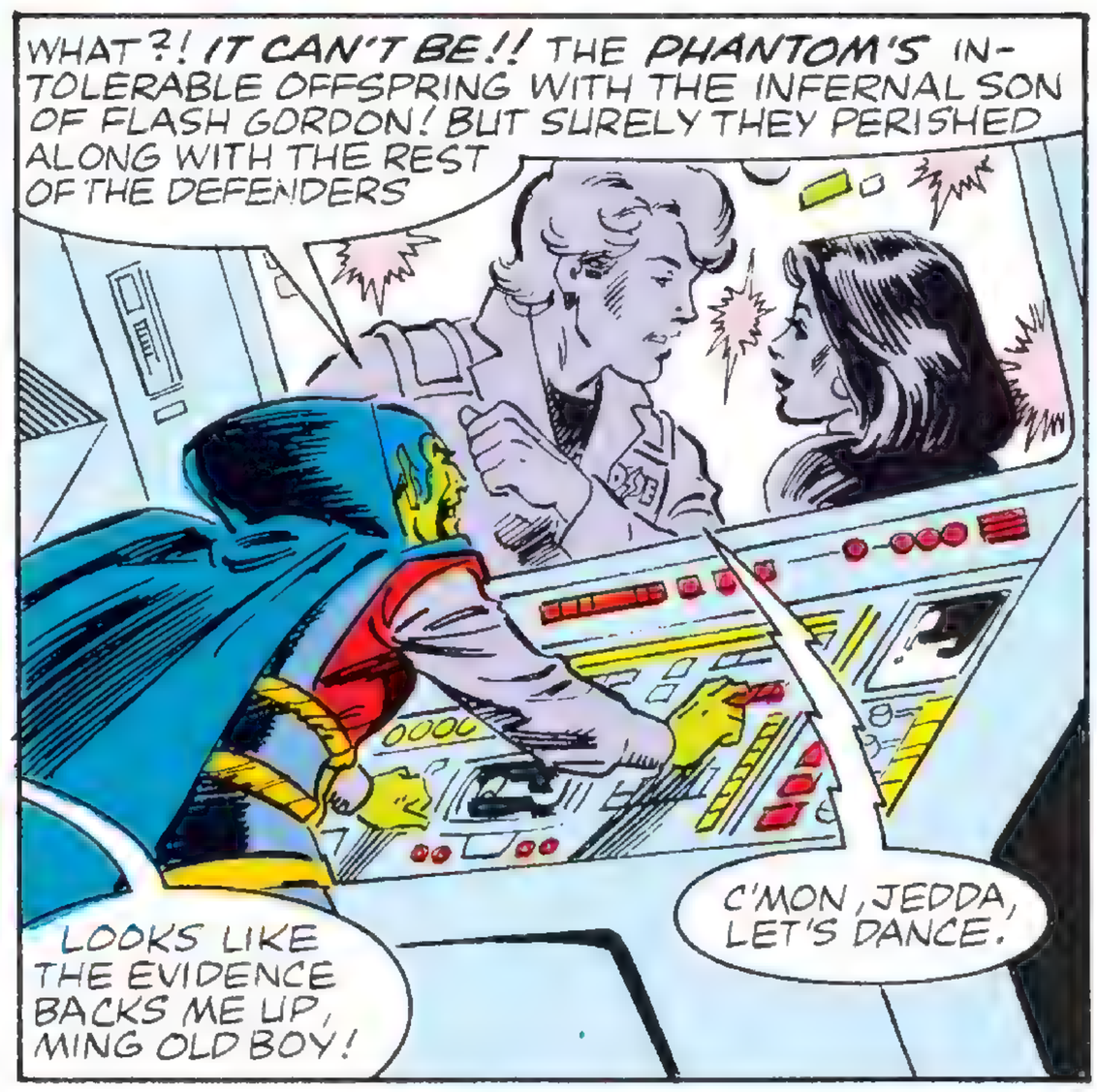
I SHALL NOT LONG ENDURE THIS INSOLENCE-- NO MATTER HOW GREAT THE POWER I MIGHT GAIN!

I ASSURE YOU...
AND I ASSURE YOU--MANDRAKE IS VERY MUCH ALIVE!

EVEN NOW I SENSE HIS MYSTIC PRESENCE!
YOU MUST REALIZE I AM THE LAST PERSON WHO WISHES FOR MANDRAKE TO BE ALIVE AND WELL. UNFORTUNATELY...
ENOUGH! THIS NEED NOT CONCERN US!

COME... LET ME SHOW YOU SOMETHING THAT MAY TRULY INTRIGUE YOU--
--A LITTLE ARMY I HAVE CREATED... IN ORDER TO INFILTRATE THE EARTH. I CALL THEM MY MEN OF FROST! EVEN NOW, ANOTHER PAWN IS SUBJECTED TO THE TRANSFORMATION.
ALREADY THESE DRONES, WHO EXIST SOLELY TO DO MY BIDDING, ARE BEING SCATTERED ALL OVER THE EARTH, INTERMINGLING WITH A HUMANITY THAT REMAINS COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF THEIR EXISTENCE.
YOU ARE CORRECT ABOUT ONE THING, MING. THIS IS MOST INTRIGUING. REST ASSURED, I SHALL RETURN, BUT FIRST THERE IS A MATTER OF VENGEANCE TO BE SETTLED.
YOU GROW TIRESOME, DR. DARK.


MASTER, BEFORE YOU GO ANY FURTHER, THERE IS SOME NEW INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY MEN OF FROST THAT YOU SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY.
IF YOU WOULD TURN YOUR ATTENTION TO THE VIEWSCREEN...


WHAT?! IT CAN'T BE!! THE PHANTOM'S INTOLERABLE OFFSPRING WITH THE INFERNAL SON OF FLASH GORDON! BUT SURELY THEY PERISHED ALONG WITH THE REST OF THE DEFENDERS
LOOKS LIKE THE EVIDENCE BACKS ME UP, MING OLD BOY!
C'MON, JEDDA, LET'S DANCE.

WHY NOT? EVERYBODY ELSE IS...

...EXCEPT FOR THAT STRANGE GROUP OVER THERE! THERE'S SOMETHING **WEIRD** ABOUT THEM. WHAT COULD IT BE?

I'VE GOT TO KNOW!

HMMMM. THEY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE **ANY** BRAINWAVES. **WAIT!** I DO DETECT SOMETHING, BUT IT'S LIKE THEIR BRAINS HAVE BEEN TURNED OFF. THERE'S SOMETHING CONTROLLING THEM--SOME**ONE!** **MING!**

RICK, WE HAVE TO LEAVE.

**LEAVE?!** ARE YOU KIDDING? WE'VE BEEN WAITING TO SEE THIS SHOW FOR MONTHS!

I KNOW, BUT THAT ISN'T IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW! I'VE JUST TELEPATHICALLY PROBED THE MINDS OF THAT ODD LITTLE GROUP THERE--AND WHAT I FOUND WAS SOMETHING TREACHEROUS!

TELEPATHICALLY? I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD TELEPATHIC POWERS!

THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME.

NOW, COME ON! I'M SORRY BUT WE'VE GOT TO TELL THE OTHERS ABOUT THIS RIGHT AWAY!

AND...

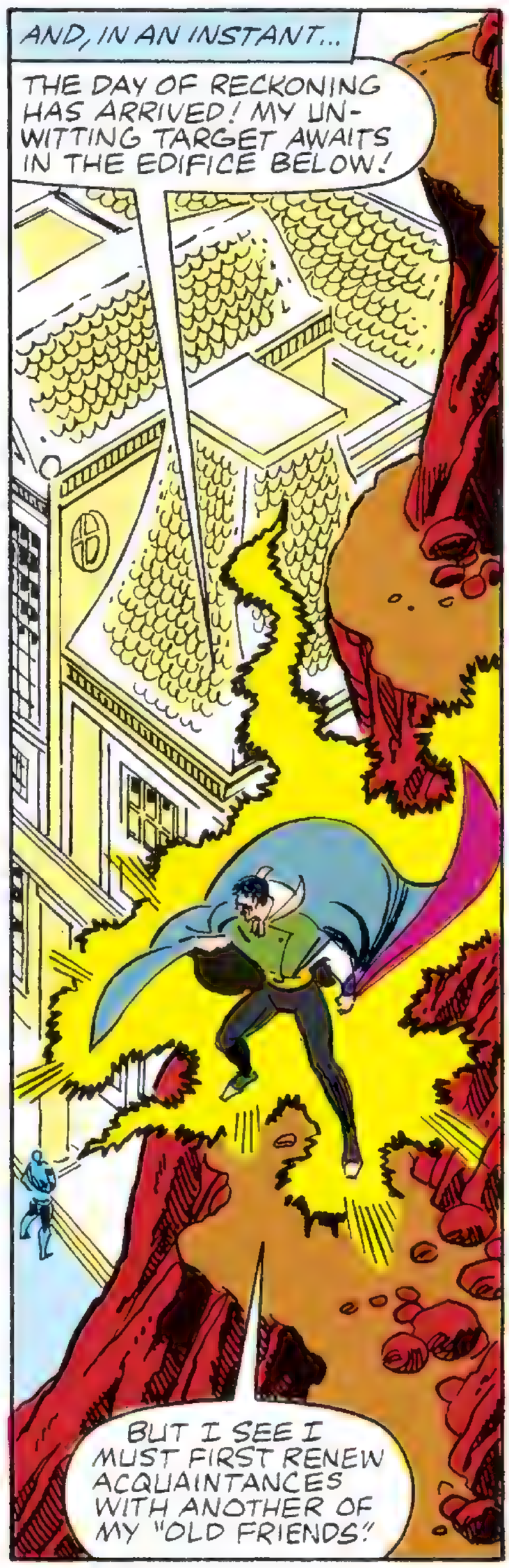
THEY HAVE BEEN POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE DEFENDERS DID **NOT**, IN FACT, PERISH AS WE WERE LED TO BELIEVE!

OCTON, SOMEONE IS GOING TO PAY FOR THIS EMBARRASSMENT!

THIS IS ALL VERY AMUSING, MING, BUT I REALLY MUST BE ON MY WAY!

I WILL NOT REST UNTIL I HAVE DEFEATED MY ENEMY.
BUT I SHALL RETURN, MING. THERE IS STILL MUCH FOR US TO RESOLVE!
I'M WARNING YOU...

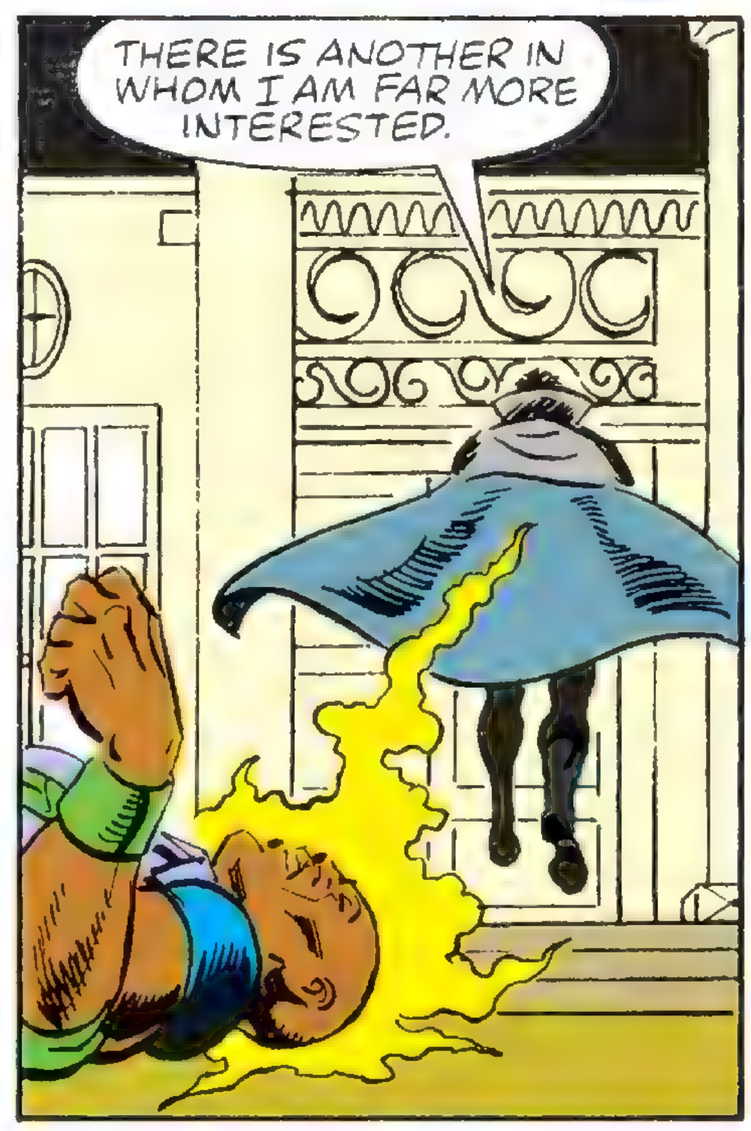
BAH! HE IS GONE...AND I AM MADE TO APPEAR THE FOOL!
WE BROUGHT THE INSOLENT MAGICIAN HERE BECAUSE OF THE GREAT POWER WE SENSED IN HIS PRESENCE. HE CANNOT BE ELIMINATED UNTIL THAT POWER IS MINE!
BUT, REST ASSURED, DR. DARK-- THAT DAY SHALL NOT BE LONG IN COMING. SO SWEARS MING!


AND, IN AN INSTANT...
THE DAY OF RECKONING HAS ARRIVED! MY UN-WITTING TARGET AWAITS IN THE EDIFICE BELOW!
BUT I SEE I MUST FIRST RENEW ACQUAINTANCES WITH ANOTHER OF MY "OLD FRIENDS."

EH?

YOU WON'T GET PAST ME, DR. DARK! LOTHAR STANDS READY!
DO TELL!

YOU ALWAYS WERE A SIMPLE-MINDED CLOD, LOTHAR. I NEEDN'T WASTE ANY TIME WITH YOU!
BRRZZZAAAPT

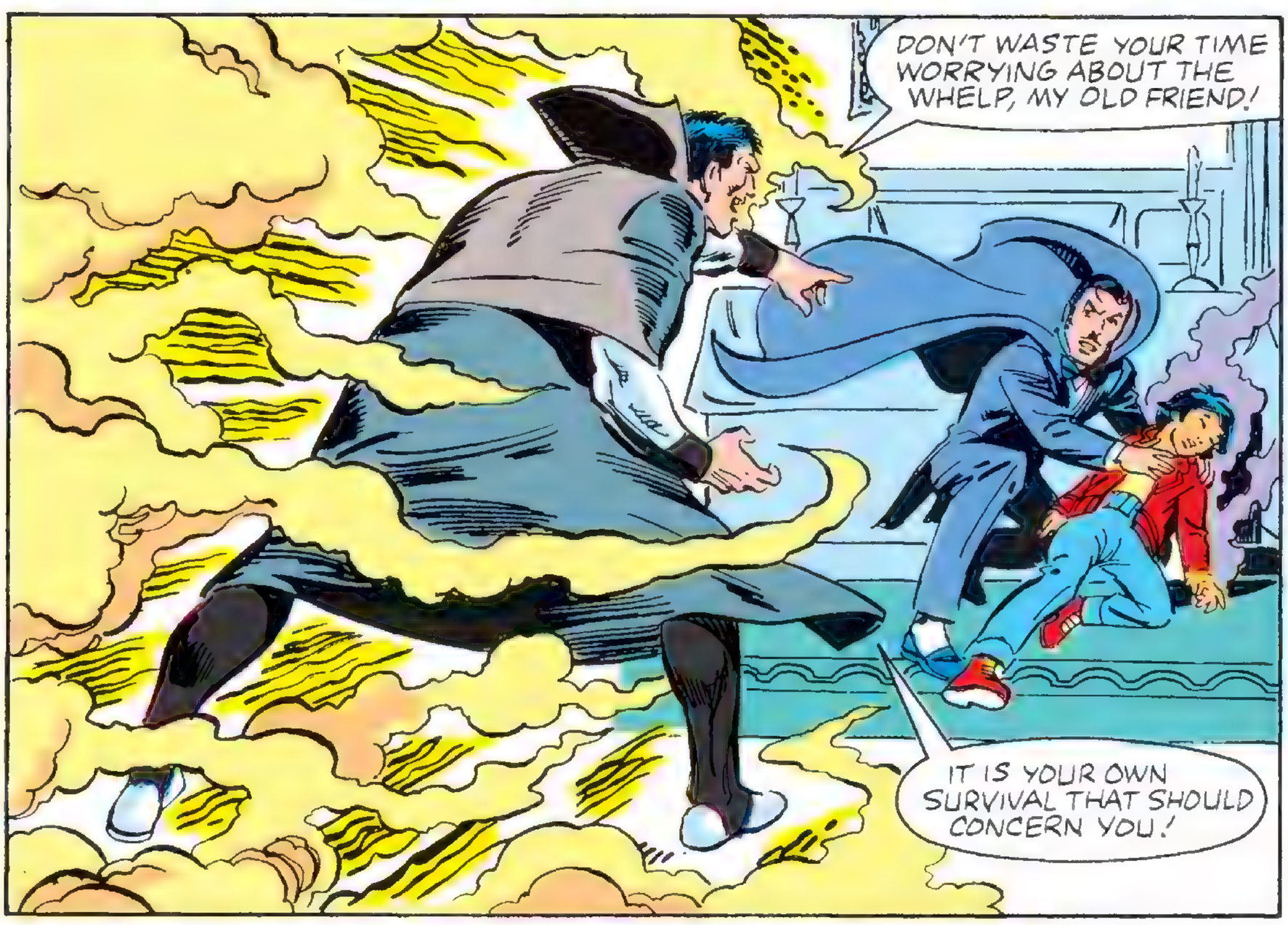

THERE IS ANOTHER IN WHOM I AM FAR MORE INTERESTED.

AND...
I SENSE A GREAT DANGER! YOU MUST LEAVE NOW, KSHIN.
WH-WHAT IS IT?

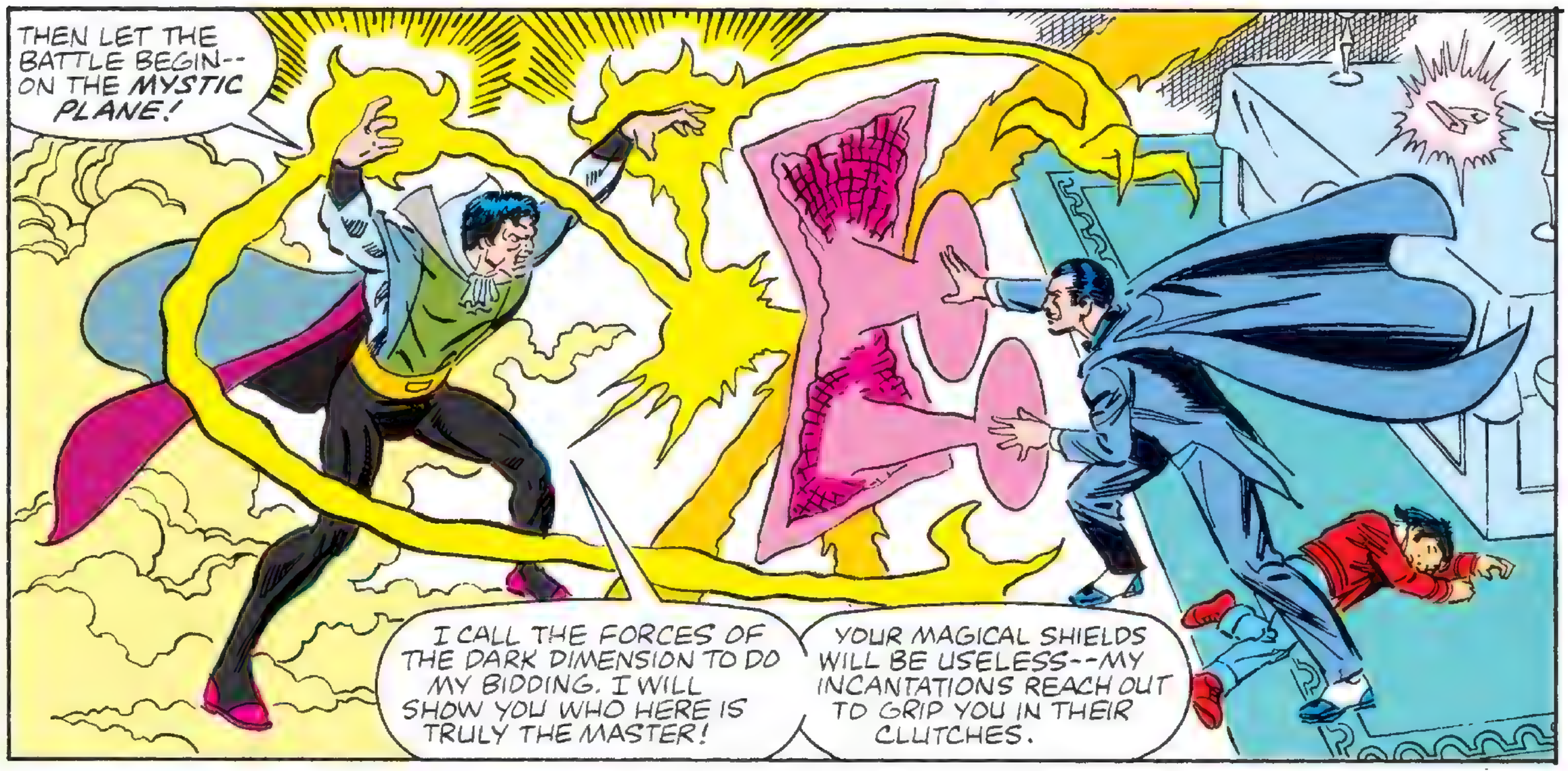
I CANNOT SAY FOR SURE... BUT THE THREAT IS VERY REAL.
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?
THAT IS NOT YOUR CONCERN. I CAN SURELY TAKE CARE OF MY OWN AFFAIRS.

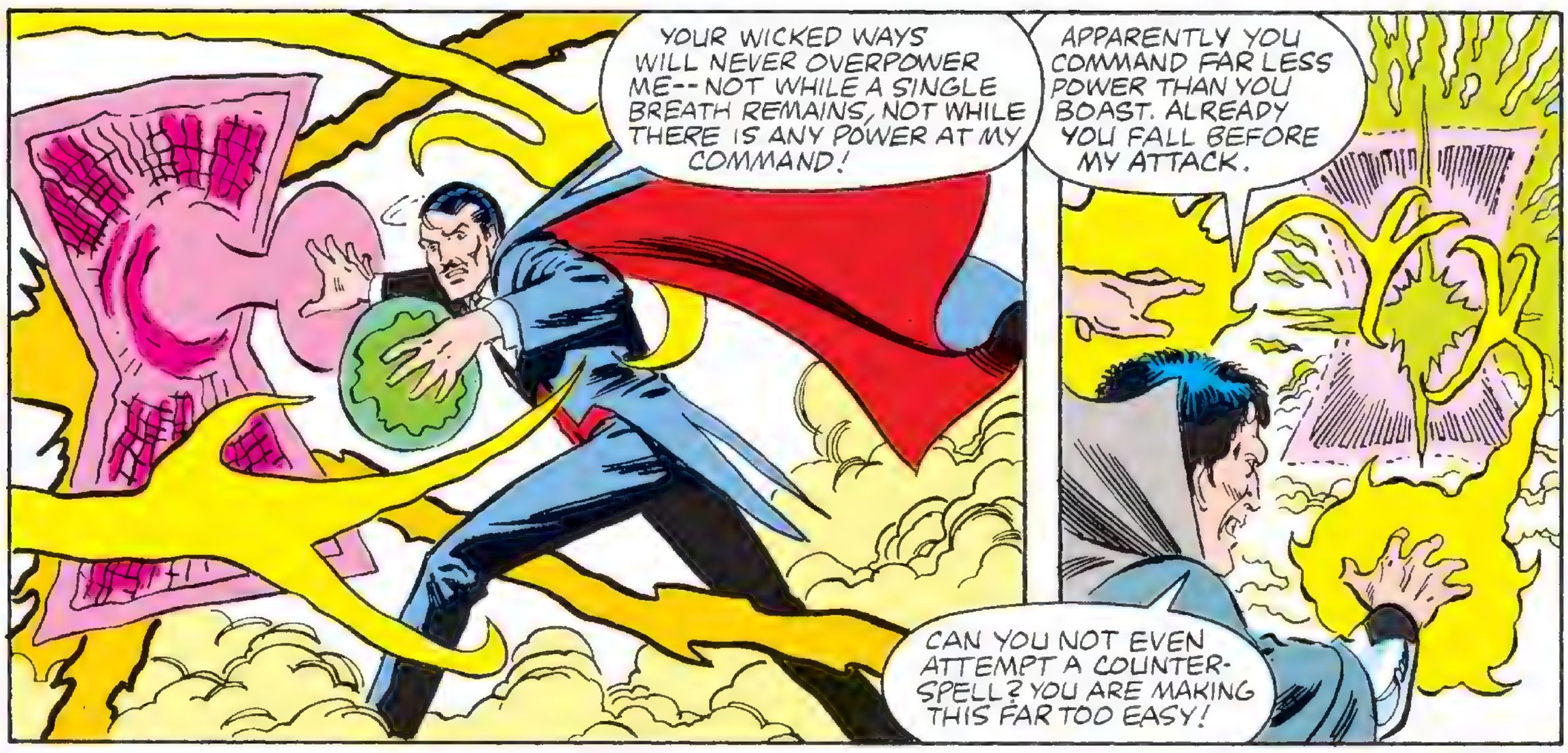
NOW, HURRY ON YOUR WAY BEFORE IT IS...

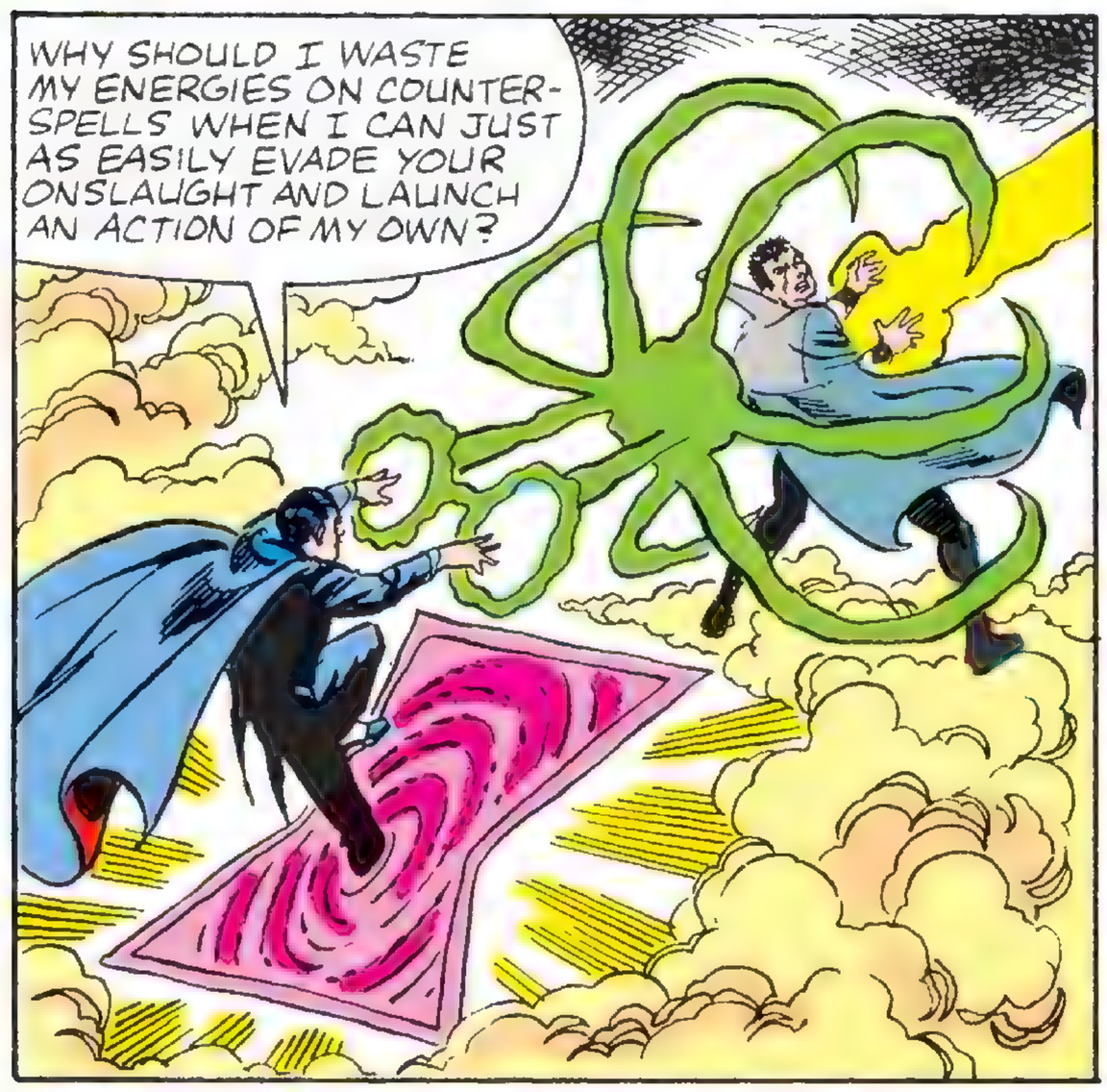
TOO LATE!
ZZZAAAP
KSHIN!


DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME WORRYING ABOUT THE WHELP, MY OLD FRIEND!
IT IS YOUR OWN SURVIVAL THAT SHOULD CONCERN YOU!

EMPTY WORDS. IT IS YOU WHO SHOULD BEWARE, DR. DARK... FOR IF ANY HARM HAS COME TO THE BOY I SWEAR YOU SHALL PAY!

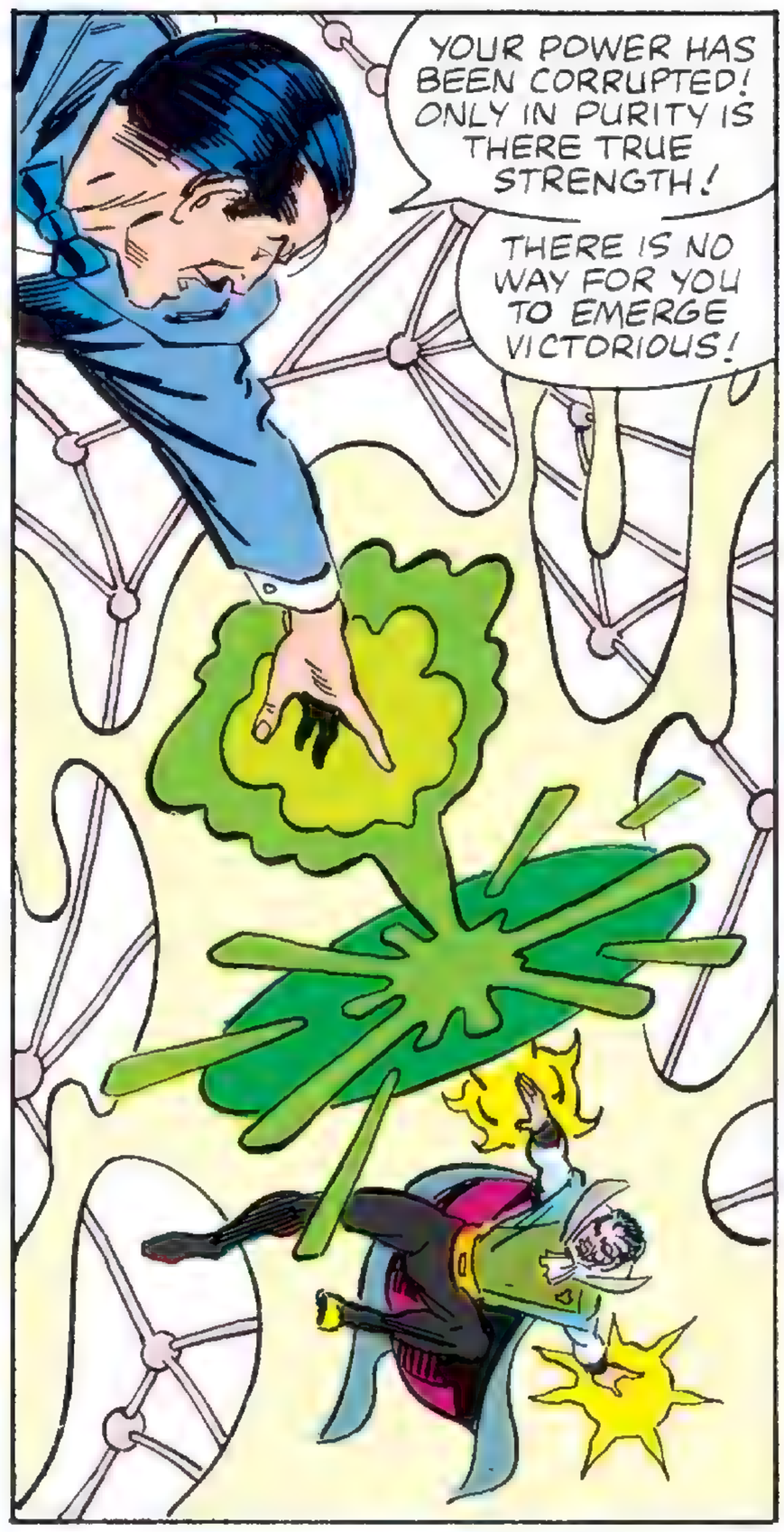

THEN LET THE BATTLE BEGIN-- ON THE MYSTIC PLANE!
I CALL THE FORCES OF THE DARK DIMENSION TO DO MY BIDDING. I WILL SHOW YOU WHO HERE IS TRULY THE MASTER!
YOUR MAGICAL SHIELDS WILL BE USELESS--MY INCANTATIONS REACH OUT TO GRIP YOU IN THEIR CLUTCHES.


YOUR WICKED WAYS WILL NEVER OVERPOWER ME-- NOT WHILE A SINGLE BREATH REMAINS, NOT WHILE THERE IS ANY POWER AT MY COMMAND!
APPARENTLY YOU COMMAND FAR LESS POWER THAN YOU BOAST. ALREADY YOU FALL BEFORE MY ATTACK.
CAN YOU NOT EVEN ATTEMPT A COUNTER-SPELL? YOU ARE MAKING THIS FAR TOO EASY!


WHY SHOULD I WASTE MY ENERGIES ON COUNTER-SPELLS WHEN I CAN JUST AS EASILY EVADE YOUR ONSLAUGHT AND LAUNCH AN ACTION OF MY OWN?

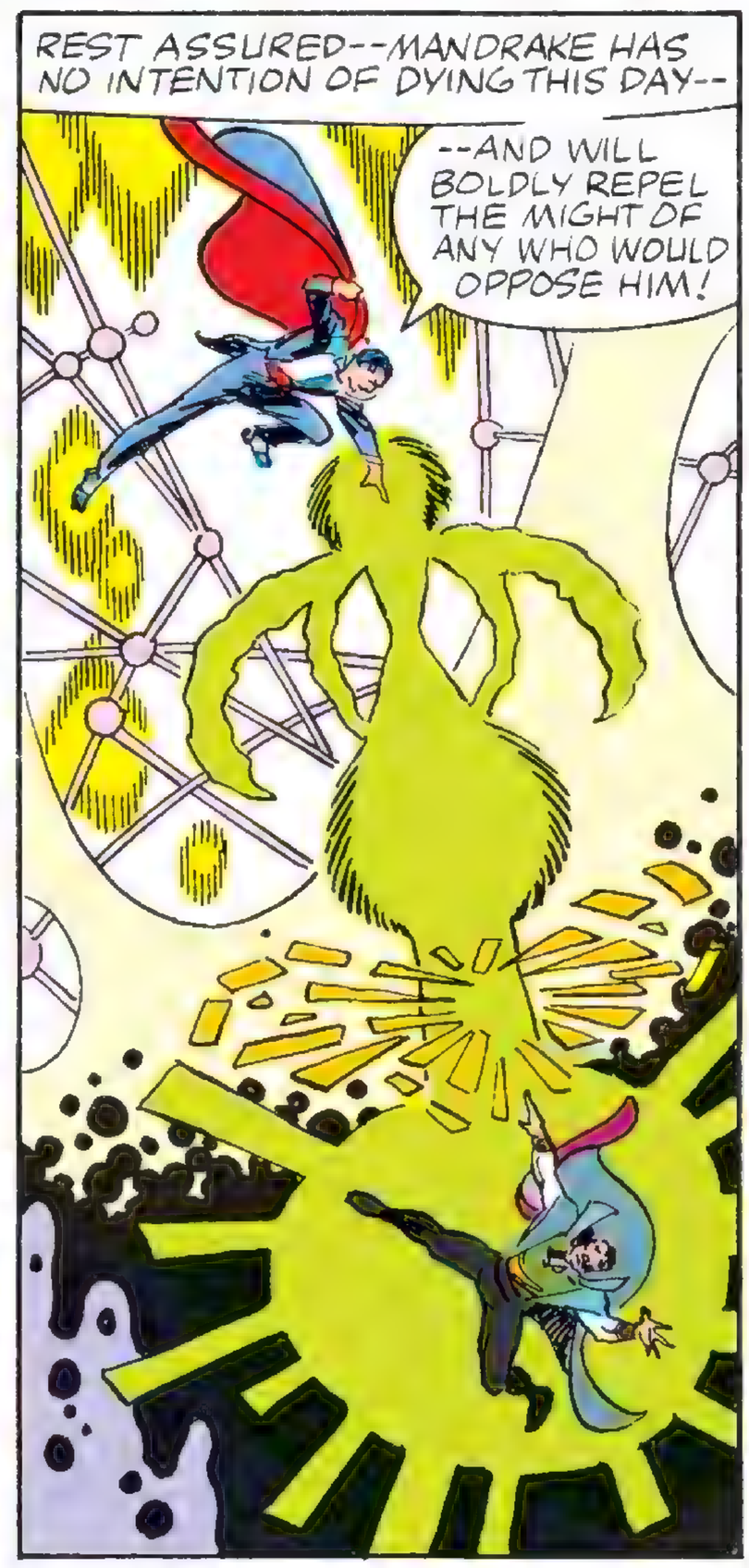
BAH! A FUTILE GESTURE! IT WILL AVAIL YOU NOTHING!

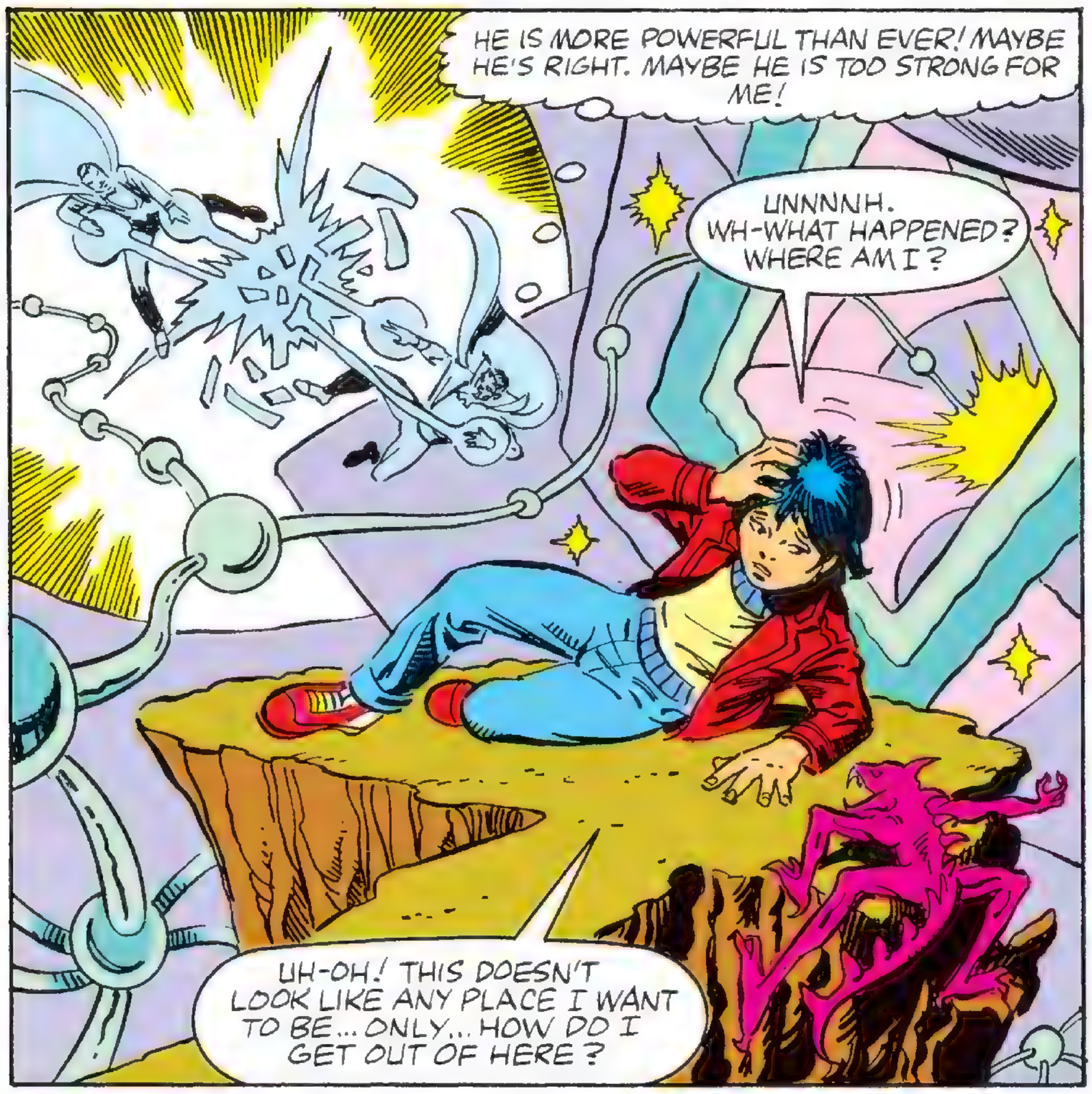
NOTHING, DARK?
DO YOU NOT FEEL YOUR POWERS WEAKENING? CAN'T YOU SEE THAT IT IS OVER?


YOUR POWER HAS BEEN CORRUPTED! ONLY IN PURITY IS THERE TRUE STRENGTH!
THERE IS NO WAY FOR YOU TO EMERGE VICTORIOUS!

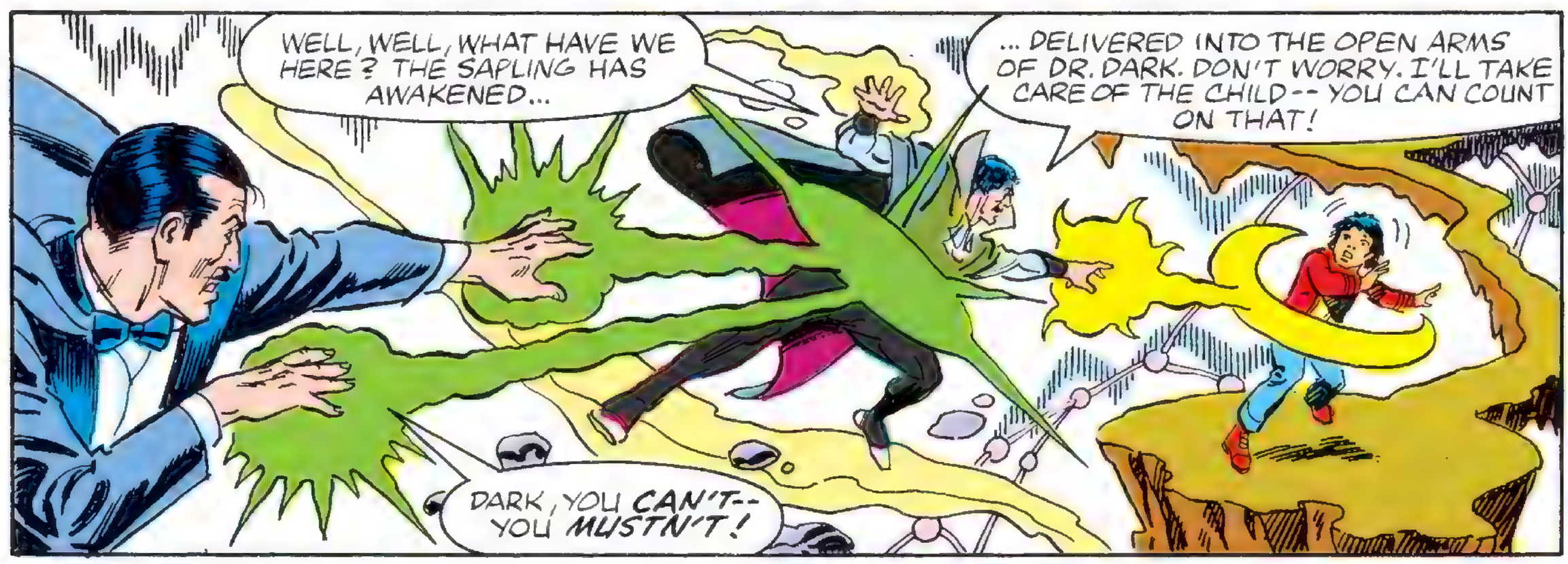
AND WHAT DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO? SIMPLY GIVE UP, SUBMIT BEFORE YOU? HAH-HAH-HAH! DON'T BE A FOOL!
AS I TOLD MING, I'M GOING TO SEE YOU DEAD!

MING? SO THERE IS EVEN GREATER EVIL AFOOT THAN I HAD SUSPECTED!


REST ASSURED--MANDRAKE HAS NO INTENTION OF DYING THIS DAY--
--AND WILL BOLDLY REPEL THE MIGHT OF ANY WHO WOULD OPPOSE HIM!


HE IS MORE POWERFUL THAN EVER! MAYBE HE'S RIGHT. MAYBE HE IS TOO STRONG FOR ME!
UNNNNH. WH-WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE AM I?
UH-OH! THIS DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANY PLACE I WANT TO BE... ONLY... HOW DO I GET OUT OF HERE?

THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO DEFEAT HIM!
YES! THE BOY! HE IS THE KEY!


WELL, WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE? THE SAPLING HAS AWAKENED...
... DELIVERED INTO THE OPEN ARMS OF DR. DARK. DON'T WORRY. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE CHILD -- YOU CAN COUNT ON THAT!
DARK, YOU CAN'T-- YOU MUSTN'T!

EVEN YOU WOULD NOT HARM ONE SO YOUNG -- SO INNOCENT!
OH, WOULDN'T I? AND WHY NOT? WHAT'S TO STOP ME, MY DEAR MANDRAKE?
I COULD KILL HIM IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, AND WITH NO MORE REMORSE THAN I WOULD FEEL IF SQUASHING AN INSECT!

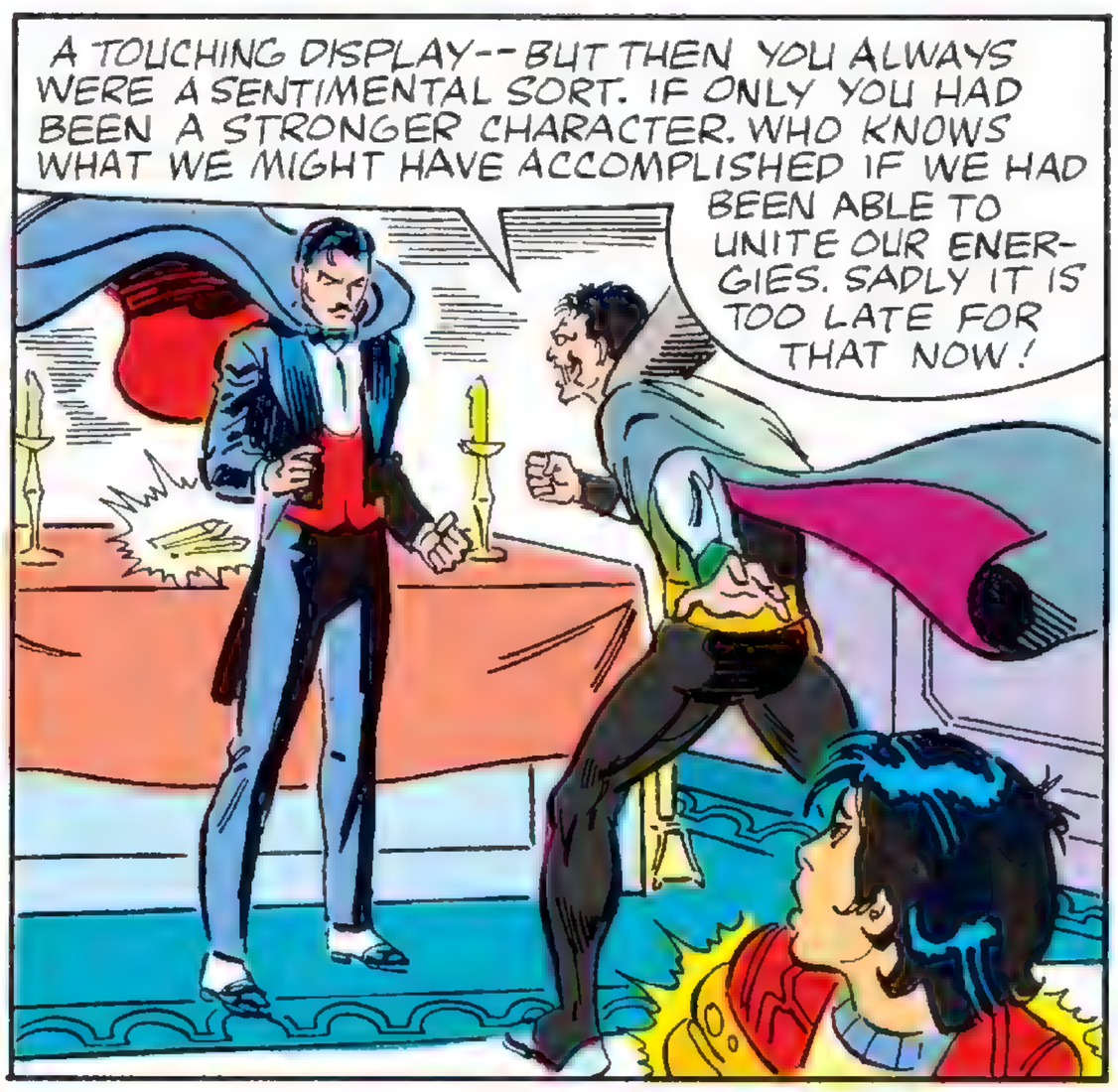
THE CHOICE IS YOURS, MANDRAKE. SURRENDER OR THE BOY'S LIFE IS FORFEIT!

NO, MANDRAKE -- DON'T DO IT! DON'T LISTEN TO HIM. YOU CAN'T SURRENDER! IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO ME!
SHUT UP! NO ONE ASKED YOU, YOU PITIFUL RUNT!

NO! YOU CAN JUST...
AAARRRGH!

KSHIN!
I MUSTN'T LET ANY HARM COME TO THE BOY... BUT IF I SURRENDER, WHO WILL STOP DR. DARK?

ENOUGH. YOU HAVE WON. I WILL DO WHATEVER YOU ASK... JUST LEAVE THE BOY ALONE.


A TOUCHING DISPLAY -- BUT THEN YOU ALWAYS WERE A SENTIMENTAL SORT. IF ONLY YOU HAD BEEN A STRONGER CHARACTER. WHO KNOWS WHAT WE MIGHT HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IF WE HAD BEEN ABLE TO UNITE OUR ENERGIES. SADLY IT IS TOO LATE FOR THAT NOW!

FRAAZZZT
OH, HOW I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT!
AARGGH!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM, YOU MONSTER?
IN ESSENCE, I HAVE KILLED HIM--

--FOR I HAVE SET EVENTS IN MOTION WHICH WILL INEVITABLY ACCOMPLISH THAT END--

--AND I SHALL REJOICE IN MANDRAKE'S DESTRUCTION!

NO! NO!

YOU ARE PARALYZED, BUT I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. IT IS REALLY VERY SIMPLE. THE SPELL I CAST HAS SEALED YOUR **DOOM!** YOU WILL LIVE FOR AS LONG AS THE CANDLES--YOUR ESSENCE LINKED TO THE FLAMES, YOUR FATE ENTWINED IN THEIR GLOW.

WHEN THE CANDLES HAVE BURNED AWAY, SO TOO WILL YOUR LIFE BE EXTINGUISHED.

AND I'M AFRAID YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

A PITY I WON'T BE ABLE TO STAY AND WATCH--IT WOULD BE MOST ENTERTAINING...

...BUT YOU WILL NOT BE LEFT ALONE. YOUR PATHETIC CHILD WILL BE HERE TO SEE YOU SUFFER THROUGH TILL THE END.

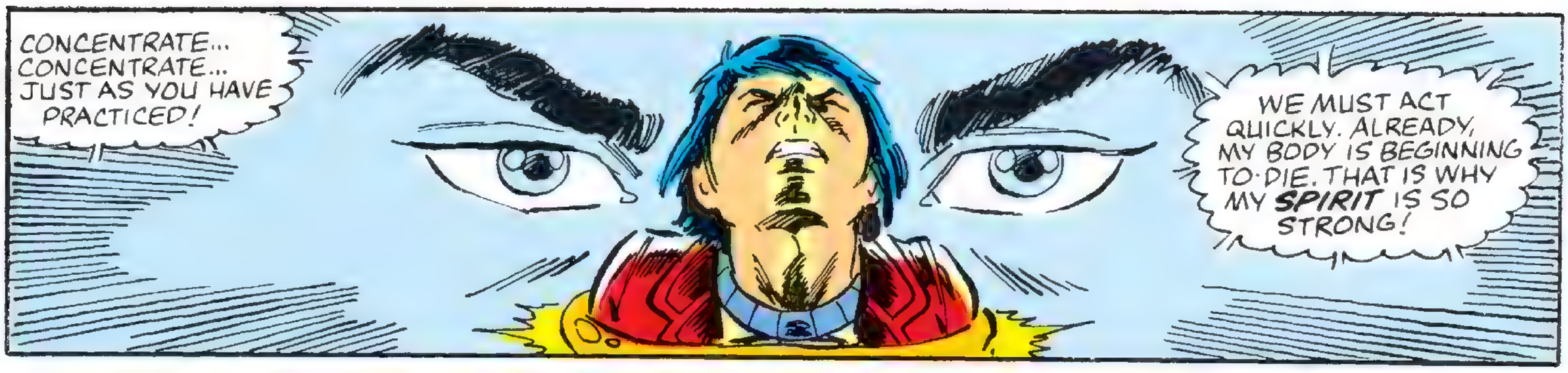
IT PROBABLY WON'T BE TOO LONG BEFORE HE JOINS YOU ANYWAY.

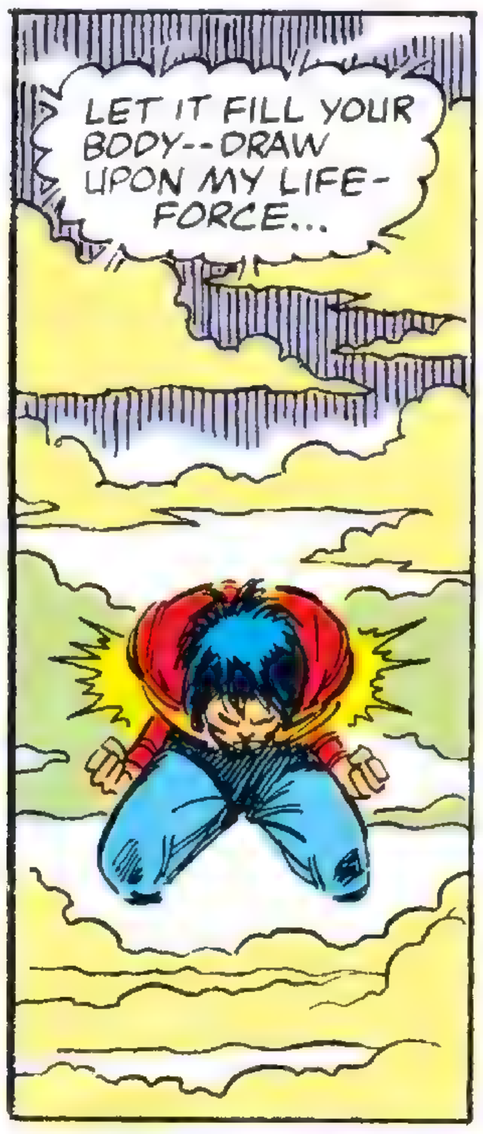
FAREWELL, MANDRAKE. THERE ARE FAR MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS FOR ME TO ATTEND TO THAN YOUR FUNERAL.

THROUGH THE POWER OF THE SINGH STONES I WILL RETURN TO THE DARK DIMENSION TO AMASS AN ARMY. YES, MING HAS THE RIGHT IDEA.

TOGETHER WE WILL CONQUER THE ENTIRE EARTH!

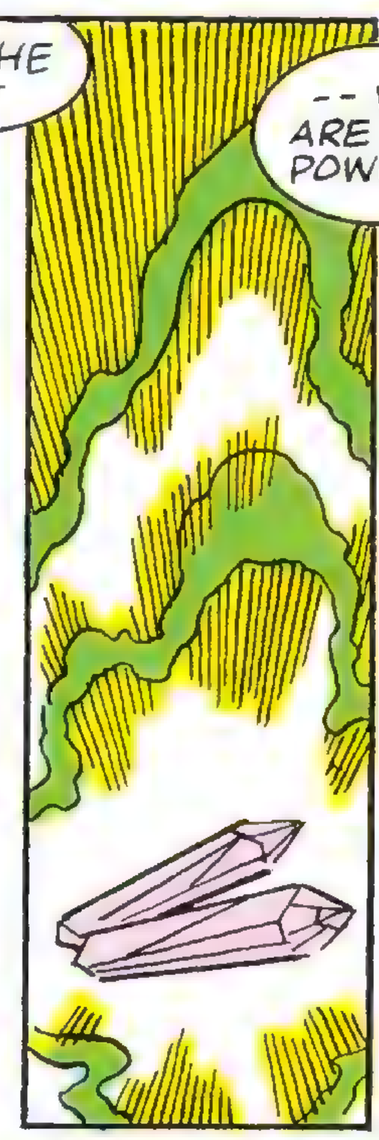
HAH-HAH-HAH-HAH!


CONCENTRATE... CONCENTRATE... JUST AS YOU HAVE PRACTICED!
WE MUST ACT QUICKLY. ALREADY, MY BODY IS BEGINNING TO DIE. THAT IS WHY MY SPIRIT IS SO STRONG!

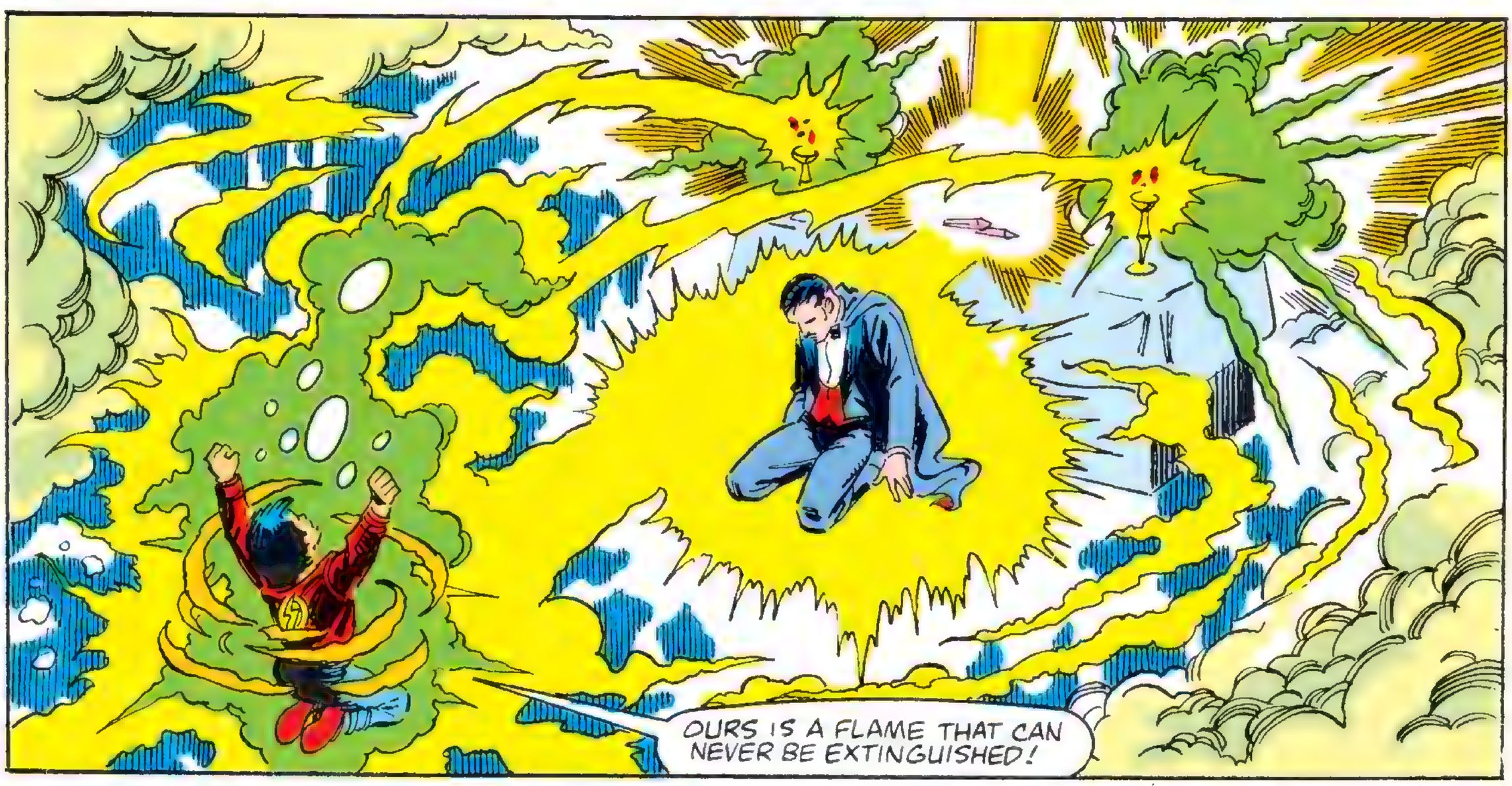

LET IT FILL YOUR BODY--DRAW UPON MY LIFE-FORCE...

... AND CONCENTRATE OUR ENERGY THROUGH THE SACRED STONES.

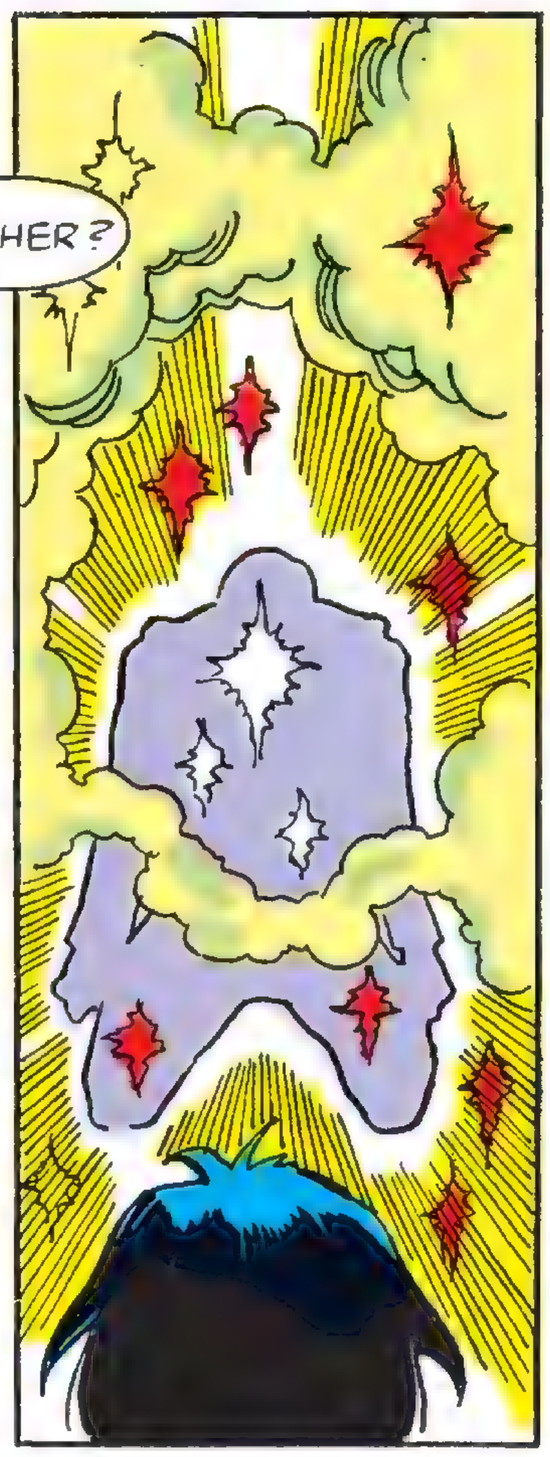
I FEEL THE POWER--

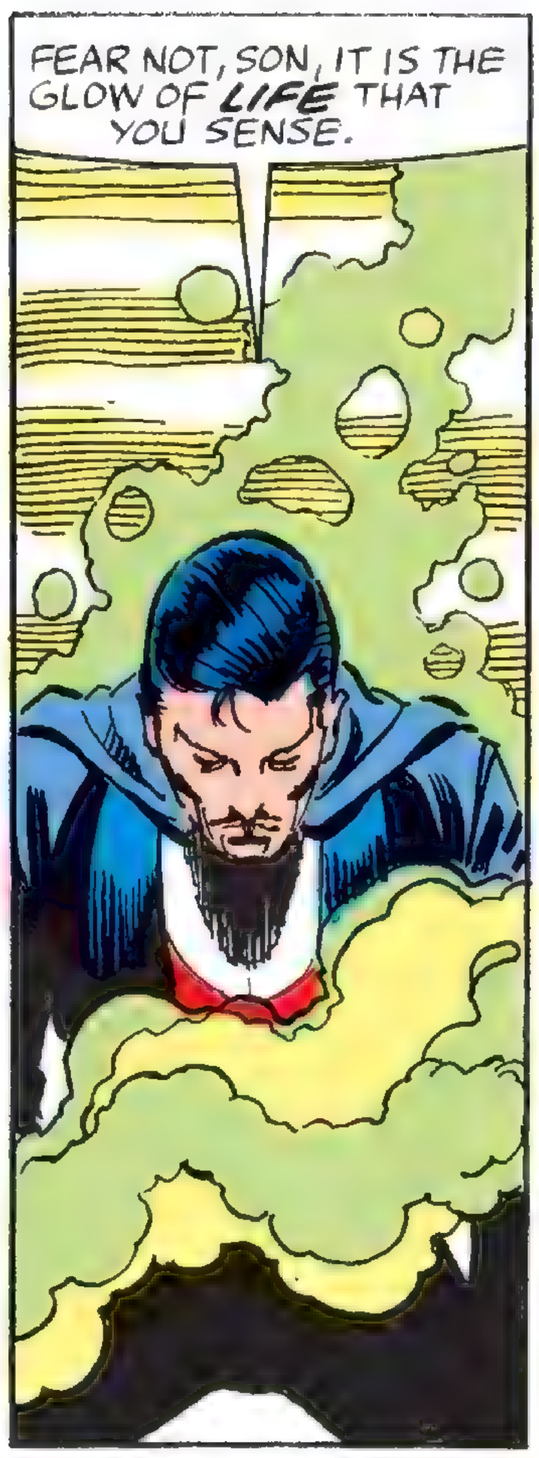

-- WE ARE THE POWER--

--AND WE WILL SURVIVE!!


OURS IS A FLAME THAT CAN NEVER BE EXTINGUISHED!

I AM FREE... BUT WHAT IS HAPPENING TO MANDRAKE ?
FATHER ?



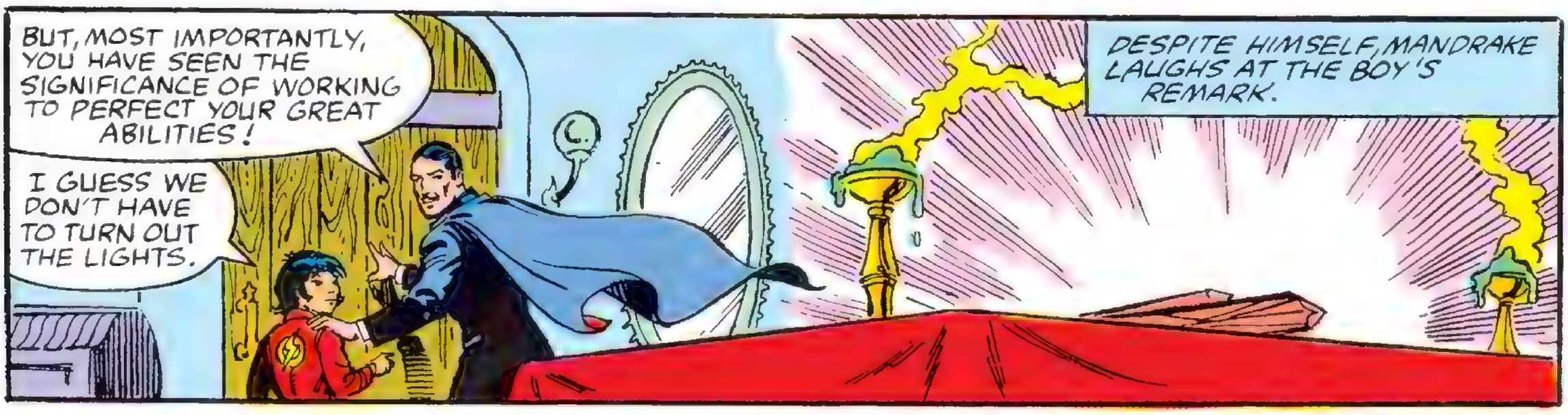

FEAR NOT, SON, IT IS THE GLOW OF LIFE THAT YOU SENSE.

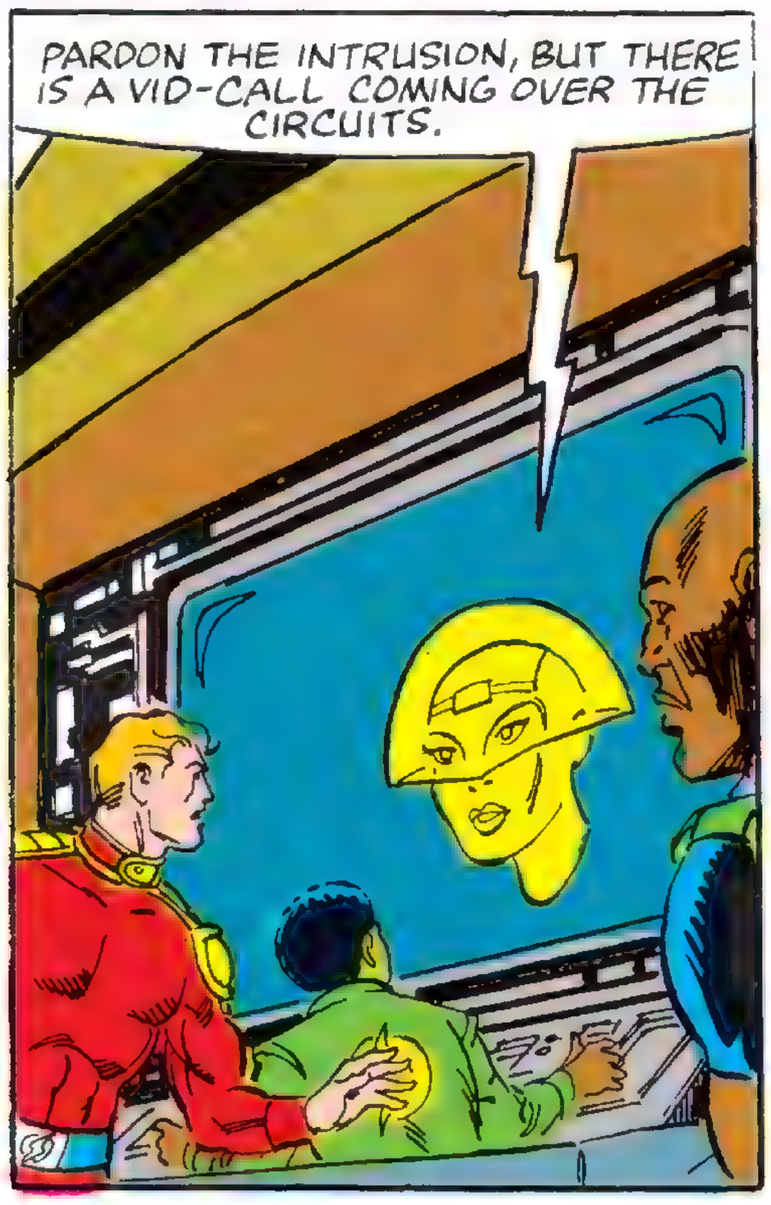
YOU HAVE DONE WELL THIS DAY.

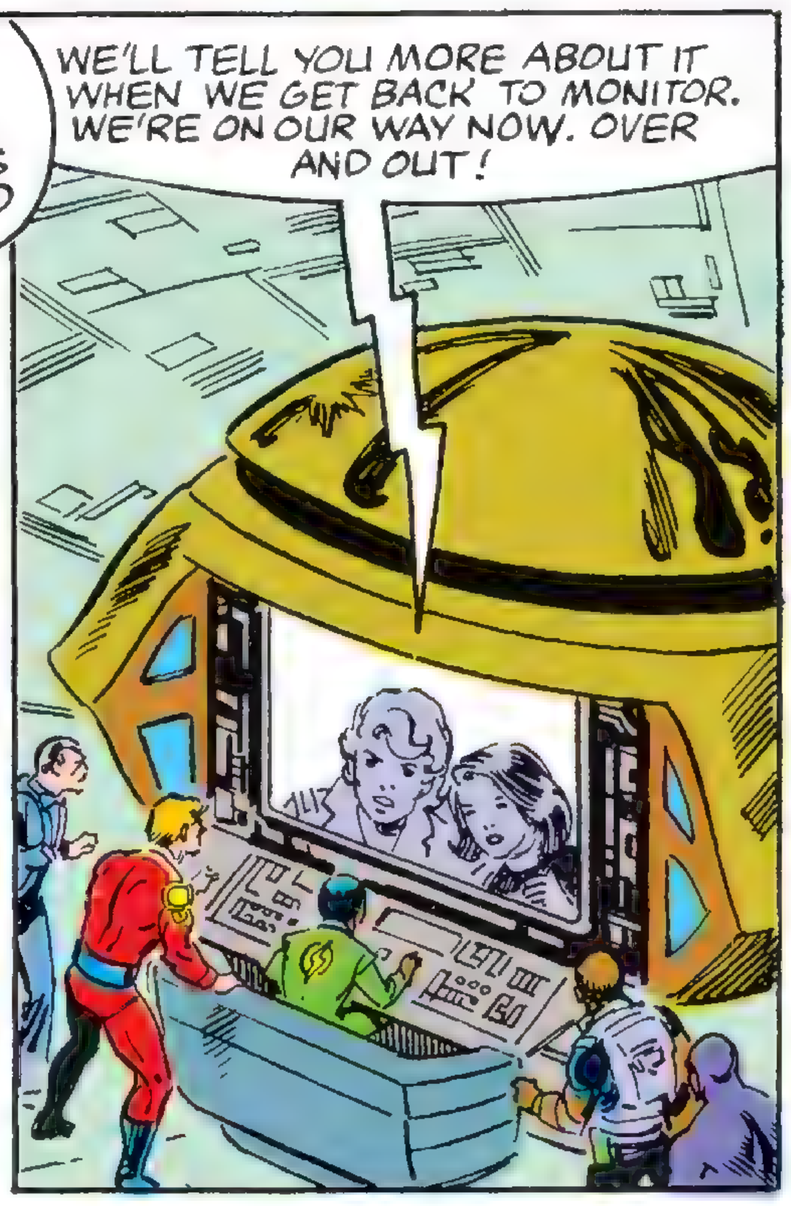
NONE COULD BE MORE PROUD... OR MORE GRATEFUL !
YOU REMAIN EVER PURE, DESPITE ALL THAT WOULD CORRUPT YOU.

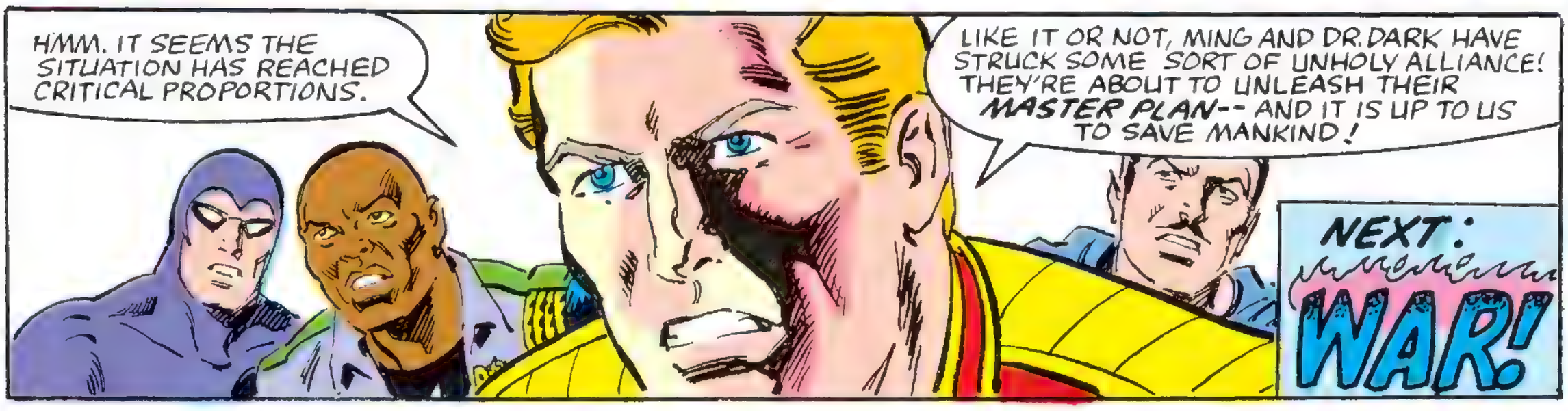
YOU THOUGHT NOTHING OF YOURSELF SEEKING ONLY TO AID ANOTHER IN NEED...
... AND IT IS ONLY BECAUSE OF YOUR INTRINSICALLY GOOD NATURE THAT YOU WERE ABLE TO CHANNEL SUCH ENORMOUS FORCES!

SEE ! I WASN'T AFRAID!
INDEED.
FAR MORE HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED THIS DAY THAN I HAD EVER ANTICIPATED!


BUT, MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU HAVE SEEN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WORKING TO PERFECT YOUR GREAT ABILITIES!
I GUESS WE DON'T HAVE TO TURN OUT THE LIGHTS.
DESPITE HIMSELF, MANDRAKE LAUGHS AT THE BOY'S REMARK.



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| **July** | Flash Gordon #1 | | | Flash Gordon: The Complete Library of Sunday Strips Vol. 1 |
| **August** | | Defenders of the Earth #1 (of 8) | | |
| **September** | Flash Gordon #2 | Defenders of the Earth #2 (of 8) | Flash Gordon Quarterly #1 | |
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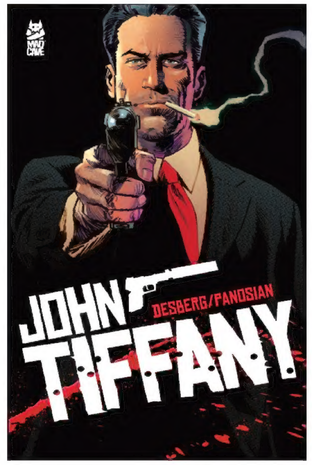


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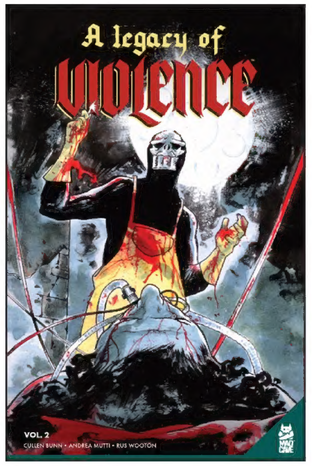


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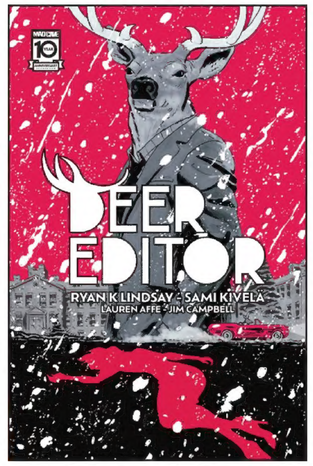


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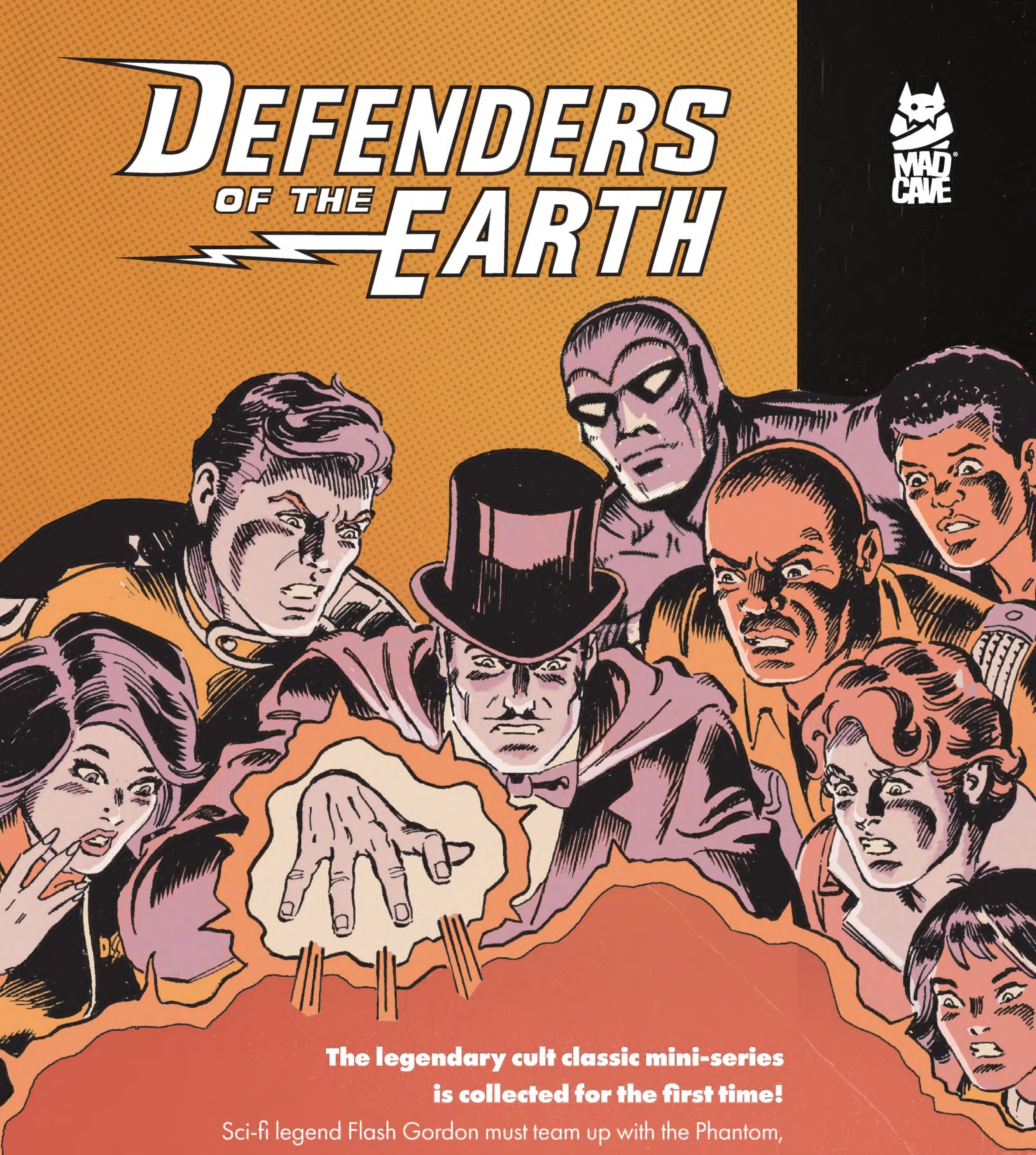

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